This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

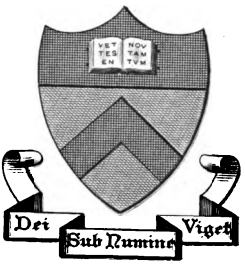
THE MAN WITH
A CONSCIENCE

CHARLES ROADS

Digitized by Google

6308
776

Library of



Princeton University.

Presented by

DR. W. B. GREENE
CLASS OF 1876

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE MAN WITH A CONSCIENCE

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Princeton University
Library

THE MAN WITH A CONSCIENCE

By
Charles Roads
Author of "Abnormal Christian," "Rural Christendom," etc.

Philadelphia
The Westminster Press
1912

Digitized by Google

COPYRIGHT, 1912
BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION
AND SABBATH-SCHOOL WORK

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

		PAGE
INTRODUCTION		
CHAPTER		
I.	THE PRIMITIVE LAW OF LOVE . . .	1
II.	BUSINESS BY THE GOLDEN RULE — THE SECOND LAW OF LOVE	14
III.	THE LAW OF LOVE FOR THE LARGER CHRISTIAN LIFE	37
IV.	THE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF CONSCIENCE	49
V.	IN THE COURT OF CONSCIENCE . . .	73
VI.	THE WILL, THE MORAL EXECUTIVE . .	82
VII.	THE RELIGIOUS NATURE TO THE AID OF THE MORAL NATURE	91
VIII.	SUCCESSIVE MORAL FACTORS IN ACTUAL CASES BEFORE CONSCIENCE . . .	101
IX.	SOME DECISIVE MORAL TESTS OF JUDGMENTS OF CONSCIENCE	115
X.	THE CONSERVATION OF SELF	120
XI.	REALIZING THE CHRISTIAN HOME . .	133
XII.	THE ETHICS OF SOCIAL LIFE	146
XIII.	CONSCIENTIOUS BUSINESS LIFE . . .	155
XIV.	THE DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN .	162
XV.	A VITAL MEMBER OF CHRIST'S BODY .	168
XVI.	CONSCIENTIOUS CHARACTER AS IN CHEMICAL ANALYSIS	182
XVII.	HOW HABITS HOLD US FAST	207
XVIII.	SHALL IT BE "IN HIS STEPS"? . . .	219

6308
.776
(RECAP)

360140

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTION

TO-DAY the perplexities of the man with a conscience may not be more vital than his difficulties of creed, but they are more distressing. Christian doctrines are with him too largely intellectual fogs or mysteries. He feels that many of his duties are matters of life and death. He will not take time in these crowded days to think Christian truths through. They seem like hazy abstractions. But in duties he is dealing with flesh and blood, with his wife and children, his everyday associates, with men and business and life.

Does he wonder what to do with a wayward son? Shall he send him to college, where to the son the chief thing may be sports, excesses, and temptations, which are the mere incidents to the earnest student? Or shall he take him into business, where he will be tried as by fire in the handling of money or in assuming great responsibilities? What is he to do?

Or, like the noble Christian manufacturer who told of his perplexity, he may be considering the question of lowering the wages of his already hard-pushed workingmen. I saw the committee sent by the men emerge from his office. They were earnest-

Digitized by Google

faced and troubled, and he was just as troubled. He was tender of heart and keenly just, but he felt compelled to refuse an increase and even to speak of a reduction, or the possible necessity of closing out his business. And his business is his life work, the only thing he knows. What can he do?

There are scores of such situations. How shall one live in a practical way that will also be righteous? How shall one be a really Christlike man in home, society, business, and in the larger life beyond the routine of daily work? How can a man know "where real right doth lie"? The perplexity is overwhelming.

> Oft in the way have I stood still,
> So much I felt the awfulness of life.[1]

Yet Christian ethics is based upon the simplest of principles — brotherly love to all men in all the relations of life. Love is the fulfilling of the whole law. Christ's teaching is that all men are full brothers in the world-wide family of the heavenly Father. There are no half-brothers, no stepbrothers, and none farther of kin. And the Christ, the Brother of all, has blazed the path through the forest.

Whence then these perplexities? Why are there such radically different decisions of good men as to vital duties? Manifestly because, though principles are simple, applications are difficult. Actual cases are novel and are usually complicated by many conflicting interests. Decisions must be quickly

[1] Wordsworth.

Digitized by Google

made. Also, general training in Christian law and in conscience is lacking; completing the case, finding the law in the case, and making the exact application of law to the case like the work of a learned judge in the higher courts.

The apparent conflict of duties is more and more pressing as the years pass. Home clamors for its rights, the church calls with great opportunities, the larger life invites, business or profession demands the right of way. But we always have the comfort of knowing that the very "conflict of duty and desire is an accompaniment of the growing self." The barbarian seldom is troubled with such a conflict, whether he be the native savage of the forest, the stunted reversion of the city slums, or the brain-arrested, heart-chilled aristocrat.

The difficulty is all the greater because there is such confusion of learned thought on the subject of conscience. Joseph Cook [1] declares that conscience is infallible within its sphere, that it proves in the soul the existence of a real God and his law, that it implies and impresses the certainty of future punishment. Bishop Butler says, "To preside and govern belongs to conscience. Had it strength as it has right, had it power as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world." [2] Whewell, on the other hand, refuses to recognize conscience as a distinct faculty. Bushnell declares the moral nature

[1] Cook, Boston Monday Lectures, "Conscience."
[2] Butler, Sermon.

Digitized by Google

is vastly inferior to the spiritual nature.[1] Wüttke identifies the moral nature strictly with the spiritual nature — "All religion is moral; all morality is religion." But he adds to the confusion by saying, "Yet they are not one and the same." While Volkmann, Sully, and others say, "Earlier forms of religious sentiment are detached from morality," and "The religious emotion is distinct from the moral in its origin and development." It will be said by the wide-awake man of the street that these philosophical disputes mean nothing to him; that he did not until now even know of them. But his teachers and pastor have known of them, been confused by them, and have given the man of the street too great a confidence in his own conscience at one time, have utterly discounted it at another time, or have never spoken helpfully on conscience. One thing, however, is sure — if one believes that his conscience by its very nature and instinct is a sure guide, one man will be complacent although he follows every crooked custom of business on the ground of necessity; another man will go on in habitual crime; while still another will regard his abnormal conscience which leads him to frown on all amusements and sports as the voice of God, which must be obeyed also by all around him or he will regard them as terrible sinners.

A scientific study of consciences should include not only the conscience of the good man who inno-

[1] Bushnell, Sermon on "The Spirit of Man."

Digitized by Google

cently holds that the finely trained conscience is the norm, but also the conscience of the bad man and the conscience of the child in all stages of his development. The investigator should spend several years as a visitor to a great state penitentiary in close contact with criminals, as the writer did, and study conscience there. He should take up the profession of teaching in the public school and the Sunday school and make thorough study of the child moral nature, including the interesting processes of conscience development. He should labor with all kinds of people in evangelistic work. Then he should observe the mercantile conscience of the man who is kind and true at home; the political conscience of the citizen who is a faithful church member, and the ecclesiastical conscience, which, Professor Bowne says, "has varied all the way from the puerile to the diabolical."

Moral training comes from the man's exercise of his own conscience. Every one of the new moral problems, which are constantly arising in the rapid progress of civilization and the amazing changes of business and social conditions, furnishes the field for such exercise. How may this exercise of conscience best proceed? What godly fathers and mothers did fifty years ago was right then, but now in a new world, what is right?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;

Digitized by Google

Lo, before us gleam her camp fires! We ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

So Lowell speaks. In another poem he describes this moral pioneer:

Come out, then, from the old thoughts and old ways,
Before you harden to a crystal cold,
Which the new life can shatter but not mold;
Freedom for you still waits, still looking backward stays,
But widens still the irretrievable space.

Precedents are universally felt to be outgrown. What was once the consensus of Christendom is met to-day by a consensus very different, or there is an entire lack of unanimity of conscience, though there is a vastly better Christianity. Other men's decisions do not apply to-day, for there are new factors. Moreover, every sincere man feels that he must be true to his own conscience, and that he may not hold decisions long in suspense.

Moral rules ready made for every conceivable case are attempted in the Koran, but the Scriptures give principles chiefly. This is far better for character development. These Christian principles the discriminating conscience must apply, and this exercise is the moral life of true manhood. Mackenzie[1] says, "Expression of law in particular rules belongs to an early stage in moral development." Rules are given to children helpfully, but if they are continued to young people they become harmful. Rules are natu-

[1] Mackenzie, "Ethics," p. 200.

Digitized by Google

rally disputed by young people, for they are able to formulate their own rules and apply them.

The three fundamental laws of Christ correspond to the three distinct sections of right living, the three realms of moral activity.

I. The purely self-activity, by self, for self, and necessarily independent of others. This is the rightful activity which is essential to personal sustenance and self-development. Eating, study, private prayer, and the acquisition of personal power are phases of this activity. This activity is covered by Christ's law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This law recognizes by implication these personal rights and makes them the measure of what rights we accord to others.

II. The strictly business activity, comprising transactions between man and man, such as manufacturing, producing, trafficking, and transporting material goods for human needs, and in professional services to others. In this activity the second law of love, the Golden Rule, is operative: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so them."

III. The larger life beyond man's duties to self and his duties in business relations. This has to do with the life lived after working hours and on Sundays, or in working hours beyond business — the life of doing good in every possible way and, as far as possible, to all men. Here is Christly love to be in full play, "A new commandment I give unto you,

Digitized by Google

that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye love one another."

In all our discussion we may be encouraged by remembering that it is in the field of the undecided problems of conscience that moral culture progresses. Moral development comes by the exercise of conscience sturdily and strenuously for oneself. The great gain of Protestantism is the inalienable right of individual conscience to life, liberty, and the pursuit of righteousness, and not only must this never be surrendered, it must be used.

It is the author's earnest hope that he may be able to introduce many men to their moral opportunity as wrestlers in conscientious questions; that he may open many more problems than he shall be able now to solve; that he may not only state moral problems, but suggest also the steps in the process of mastering them, and that he may then use the results as stepping-stones to still more perplexing and profound questions. This is an arena for moral and spiritual giants, and it makes other giants.

Digitized by Google

The Man With a Conscience

I

THE PRIMITIVE LAW OF LOVE

THE purely self life, for self and by self, may be the farthest removed from selfishness. It will never be selfish if it is made a preparation for noble purposes beyond self. But it may end in self. The stream becomes a swamp quickly when it turns in wholly upon itself.

There is, therefore, a rightful and necessary activity for self-conservation and for the growth of individual power and character. For this fundamental work a man must have time to be alone. Certain results can be secured only by his own efforts with little help from others. Here the wise man will not desire another to help him, and will seldom proffer help to his neighbor.

There is a wide range to these self-isolated activities—from the savage man, eating and lounging for recuperation, with no scheme for self-growth but the physical, to the cultured Christian, seeking in ever-widening circles time for intellectual study, for esthetic training, for social influence, for spiritual

Digitized by Google

meditation and private prayer, and for the best condition of his whole nature. This self-activity includes, therefore, acquisition for proper use, by self, for self and others, of property, knowledge, honors, official position, personal powers of every kind. It is most effective for all and for the progress of civilization that every man shoulder his own burden of self-activity. The power of personal initiative depends upon this splendid isolation of individual life for the culture of the finest personality, its development and perfecting. Here is the realm where another's help, if too great, is harmful. Manliness and character demand to be let alone. The true teacher only stimulates the self-activity of the pupil and gives the minimum of assistance in study.

It is now possible to define exactly what each man must do for himself. In eating, for instance, there are those who cook and prepare the food for us, but upon every man rests the responsibility of deciding what to eat, how much, and when — a grave responsibility, indeed, to a thoughtful man who realizes the awfulness of having only one life upon this planet between the eternities. So also is it a serious matter to choose intellectual exercise ground — books, schools, and specialties for investigation. Teachers, friends, and librarians may act as guides and spectators, but the man alone must build up himself. Others may help him quarry raw material, but he cannot delegate to another the cutting of the stones, the selection of the plan, the actual placing of the

Digitized by Google

stones, any more than another can be delegated to eat his meals with the idea that the strength gained by eating will be mysteriously transferred. The self-made man is not a special class. Every man, good or bad, who amounts to anything is self-made.

This community of human lives, thus separated to grow each to its best, will in the growing daily touch in the school, the home, and in the larger world. They ought to touch without trenching upon each other's rights, without harm, encroachment, restriction, or overlapping. Here will apply the primitive law of love, the ancient law of Moses, which Christ reaffirmed and made the lowest step of his laws of love. We may state it afresh as follows: *Every man should reach perfect harmlessness toward all men in those activities which are rightly for purely personal needs.* This is loving one's neighbor as oneself, "the love which worketh no harm" to another, the summary of the second table of the Mosaic fundamental moral code.

The law of perfect harmlessness to others in self-activities is expanded into the five prohibitions of the second table of Moses.

1. Do no harm to another's life — "thou shalt not kill." The length of a human life must not be suddenly terminated by another, for this is murder, and if done by design, it is first degree murder, even in state law. Nor may we cut life short a few years by imposing or failing to remove such hard conditions as perilous labor without all possible safeguards,

Digitized by Google

personal abuse, noxious and unsanitary environment, insufficient food or shelter. All such conditions are caused by greed in personal life, or by exceeding one's rights in acquisition. In time these kill men just as surely as prompter methods.

Because of its very general form, the great commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (it does not say exclusively, thou shalt not kill immediately or within a few hours), includes manifestly a prohibition of all shortening of life. The universal conscience now regards conditions producing disease — whether these are permitted by landlords in slum houses or by employers in unwholesome factories — as long-range instruments of murder. The cowards shoot from a safe place at a distance not yet covered by human law. But they must learn that life has other dimensions than length. To shorten life is seen to be murder, but to cripple its power to reach out is more cruel. Christian civilization is developing child labor laws and compulsory education to prevent the narrowing of the life of children. The playground, of which city conditions robbed the child, is also being restored that his life may be more joyful, and that he may have the social culture which play only can give. Evening schools and lectures are provided for workingmen, that the lack of their childhood may be atoned for.

What, then, about limiting the height of life? What about putting out eyes, not with red-hot irons, as the king of Babylon did to the Jews, but by strictly

Digitized by Google

legal methods of modern civilization? What about tying the head fast to the knees so that all upward vision is lost?

> Then Christ sought out an artisan,
> A low-browed, stunted, haggard man,
> And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin,
> Pushed from her faintly want and sin,
> . . . "Lo, here," said he,
> "The images ye have made of me."[1]

Life has four dimensions — length, breadth, height, and the measureless inner life with God. To empty the inner life of its joy and power by gross superstition, and priestly oppression, — thus depriving human souls of their Saviour Brother — is the worst murder of all.

Jesus goes so far as to say that even words of anger and cruel condemnation break the commandment concerning life.[2] There are bitter words that cut and lacerate the heart more terribly than ever Roman scourge with nails tied in its whip tore the bared back and shoulders. And who will say they do not shorten life just as much?

Every principle of the gospel emphasizes height and breadth of life rather than mere length. Length, indeed, is always to be sacrificed to height, height never to length. Surely, therefore, the law of harmlessness to another's life while enjoying one's own applies to the withholding of the gospel of salvation from the great wide world. Shall Christian people

[1] Lowell, "A Parable." [2] See Matt. 5 : 22.

Digitized by Google

monopolize the salvation of Christ, forming a trust against two thirds of mankind who have never yet heard of him? All other trusts are dwarfed into pettiness by this demoniac selfishness. What can be worse than the squandering in personal luxury of millions of treasure produced by gospel conditions and made secure to their possessors by gospel law, while the beginnings of this civilization are denied to the rest of humanity?

The besetting sin of the life for self is neglect of others. If all men had full possession of their rights the simple duty would be not to encroach upon another's field — a negative duty of harmlessness. But we must love our neighbor as ourself by positive effort to restore his long-defrauded rights in many things. To give him equal opportunity with the best favored, to claim for him every right we claim for ourselves, to begin "the struggle for the life of others" as soon as we struggle for our own, — this is loving our neighbor as ourselves.

The sin of neglect is becoming a crime in law, which is ever extending in scope and definiteness. The Mosaic law is remarkable for its clear statement of the responsibility of a man for an unguarded house roof, a goring ox left to run at large, and other pure acts of neglect by which the neighbor is injured. Slowly, and against the stubborn resistance of great interests, human law is extending its shield over the places where the self-centering of men even unintentionally harms the other man. The Christian

Digitized by Google

man will not wait until the law drives him to take precautions that no harm shall come, wittingly or unwittingly, from him to his neighbor. Abraham Lincoln would not take advantage of "law honesty."

The same general considerations hold for the seventh and the eighth commandments, which enjoin such use of our person and property for personal ends as will work no harm to the person and property of all others. It is wrong to use my property so as to destroy or impair in value that of my neighbor. Whatever advantage I get from such use is taken from him to the extent that it depreciates his estate. I give him no return for what I take.

My neighbor's good name is guarded by another commandment. It is wrong to injure his reputation or influence by any false impression I may make upon others while seeking to promote my own reputation. Telling the truth unnecessarily about a man's past life may be false witness because of his good present life. There are no little things in defamation; it is the exposure of petty foibles and failings which brings a man into contempt and causes a serious diminution of his personal influence. The great French preacher, Massilon,[1] says: "The first pretext which authorizes the defamation and censure of our brethren is the pretended insignificance of the vices we expose to view. We do not tarnish the man of character by denouncing his or the woman's

[1] Sermon on "A Malignant Tongue."

Digitized by Google

conduct as criminal, but by turning upon a thousand faults which show them capable of the rest; inspire a thousand suspicions pointing to what we dare not say; satirical remarks which discover a mystery; poisonous interpretations to ridicule, yet protesting the persons are incapable of cunning and deceit." There are many ways of being false witness besides the use of words in conventional form — a curl of the lip, an averted eye, a significant insinuation by gesture, a suggestion that things are not all right. The Apostle James [1] gives a powerful commentary on the ninth commandment: "The tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire of hell. . . . The tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison." (American Revision.)

Defamation is a deadly poison that goes deeper than the physical life, for it destroys the most precious possession a man can acquire, — his personal influence.

"Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed."

This law of perfect harmlessness to my neighbor, while developing self, extends even to my desires. I may not, without sin, covet or desire to deprive him of his possessions of any kind. Such coveting

[1] James, ch. 3.

Digitized by Google

is immensely harmful to myself and may be forbidden for that reason. But it is harmful to the neighbor, for, if the covetous desire exists, it will inevitably express itself in many ways to his discomfort and loss, even without going to the length of stealing what it covets.

All these commandments have to do with our harmlessness to others. Now, what is our duty when the other man does harm to us in his self-activities? Christ's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount deals with this also. Moses taught retribution in kind, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life," but Jesus changes this command also to love. His law of neighbor love requires that we suffer the harm done to us personally and permit, or even offer to permit, more harm. "If any man take away thy cloak, let him have thy coat also"; "if any man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other cheek"; "if any man compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." This is the best way, the most practical way to end the injurious activity. It is the short cut to making a friend of an enemy. The policy of non-resistance to personal injuries when consistently applied works perfectly. It worked even in the dealings of the Friends with the savage American Indians. It worked in Russia against the cruel despotism of the Czar as Count Tolstoi exercised it. More desperate cases than these do not exist.

This suffering all injuries in personal life is only "loving my neighbor as myself." Does he come to

Digitized by Google

me in a raging passion or in desperate meanness and greed? If I love him as I love myself, I will seek to protect him also against himself. I will see that to retaliate would do greater harm to me and to himself; that I can minimize the injury to myself by non-resistance, and so most surely destroy his power to injure himself morally and spiritually as he does really injure himself more than he can injure me. Any wrong done to another doubles in results of wrong in the doer. So I will let him double the wrong to me in the assurance that it will then cease to both.

A missionary in Africa was advised not to preach this doctrine at first to the thieving natives. But he did; and lo! just as his friend declared, the exultant natives began to steal. With sublime faith he gave them in each case something additional until his cottage was bare of the last portable article. Then the thieves gathered and he preached the same love with no resentment. But what a transformation! One after another the looters shamefacedly returned the goods and brought also rice and game and fruit.

More time for personal culture is given the self-isolated life as Christian civilization advances. The hours of labor are shortening, but all too slowly; the libraries are multiplying, the instinct for meditation is asserting itself. The best manhood demands more time to grow. The old monk of the Middle Ages made piety an end in itself — the chief thing in the Christian life; his piety was to be fondled and nursed and put on exhibition in a glass. He went

Digitized by Google

apart to become good, but it was simply being good for nothing in particular — a goodness which quickly spoils in many cases and becomes vilest hypocrisy, vice, and crime. Like this is the Sunday piety of Protestantism which does not hitch to Monday's business and week-day society. This gives us the immoral religious man who is in all our churches. The true Christian, however, wants self-cultivating time to become good for larger service for mankind. He wants to be like Christ, who gave thirty years in silence out of thirty-three to this isolation for greatest personal power, who spent forty days with God after that, and whole nights on the mountains in prayer. As Prof. William James says[1]: "Keep the faculty of effort alive by a little gratuitous exercise every day. Be systematically ascetic or heroic in little unnecessary points. Asceticism of this sort is like the insurance a man pays on his house or goods. The tax does him no good at the time and possibly never. But if the fire does come his having paid will be his salvation. So with the man who has daily insured himself to habits of concentrated attention, energetic volition, self-denial in unnecessary things. He will stand like a tower when everything rocks around and softer fellow mortals go like chaff."

In his commemoration ode on the Cambridge anniversary, Lowell thus describes Washington:

> The discipline that wrought through life-long throes,
> That energetic passion of repose,

[1] William James, "Psychology," Vol. I, p. 126.

Digitized by Google

High poised example of great duties done,
Broad-minded, higher-souled, there is but one,
Who was all this, and ours, and all men's, WASHINGTON!
The unexpressive man whose life expressed so much.

In the purely personal life, then, there is but one relation between man and man—that of brotherly love which does no harm to another. The orbits of all good lives will not cross each other in collision. Even a magnificent cometlike character such as Washington or Lincoln finds his own path and does not need to shatter, as old tyrant conquerors did, the lives of thousands in humbler planes. The law of this self-development as related to others, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is not the highest law of love, as many so often regard it, but the lowest of Christ's three laws of love, far though it be from actual realization in the world. It is based on the standard of personal rights claimed for himself and demands consideration in the same measure for all other men. It holds the scales in perfect balance of rights and duties, "no rights without duties, no duties without rights."

This was the law, first of prohibitions, then of love, for primitive times and conditions. Self and the neighbor, the next farmer, were all the little world of men then contained. Activities of independent self, and for self and that extended self, the immediate family, included about everything in life. The man himself cultivated on his farm all the food he ate; he constructed his own hut to live in; he or

Digitized by Google

his wife spun the fabric or sewed the skins of beasts for their clothing; he was the only teacher his children had, his own physician, and even his own priest. In Palestine there was the minimum of buying and selling, and no factories or large workshops. Indeed, when Moses gave the law, and for forty years thereafter, the chief occupation of the people was the daily gathering of manna and of occasional quail and other game, a wholly independent life for each man and his family. The law for such simple and primitive conditions was properly, "Do no harm." Later it assumed the positive expression, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."[1]

In Christ's time life still was extremely simple, but such commercial development as was coming required a larger love, the love of the Golden Rule. And the life beyond required still more love. Yet still, as we have seen, there is a self-independent life and always will be in its proper fundamental sphere. For this life Christ reënacted the old law of harmlessness to another in the spirit of love and added the duty of forgiveness of injuries and non-resistance to wrongs in this personal realm. This law of love will always have its place, for the isolated life for greater personal power in service is first in the new social interpretation of the gospel of Christ. It is in no sense an individualistic Christianity, but Christ's own perfect example of the way to prepare to go about doing most good.

[1] Lev. 19 : 18.

Digitized by Google

II

BUSINESS BY THE GOLDEN RULE — THE SECOND LAW OF LOVE

THE second section of the conscientious life has to do with business relations. Think now of the vast and complicated network of daily occupations — agriculture, mining, manufacture, transportation, merchandise, the care of households and of great hotels; think of the teacher, the physician, the lawyer, the journalist, the artist, the musician, the pastor, the statesman. In their daily toil each man may make his best contribution, according to his calling and ability, to the needs of mankind. Instead of each man doing practically everything for himself, as he did in the time of Moses, thousands of people serve each man and he serves thousands. To the Christian man his business or profession is his call from God, and he seeks God's guidance daily in his work and God's blessing upon it. The standard of true greatness which Christ proclaimed is practically the world's to-day, — the man who is servant of the largest number is the greatest among men, and he who is servant of all men is the greatest of all time. That is to say, the

Digitized by Google

man whose work or invention or helpful movement reaches the largest popular need is greatest.

The fundamental law for making business life Christian is the Golden Rule, which may be defined as *strict justice and veracity in the spirit of love in all transactions between man and man.*

Let us analyze the Golden Rule in the light of what is best for business protection and development. It is the law of ethical justice in business transactions. It is not good to be generous in business dealings, but to be simply and exactly just. Take the common instance of selling and buying a pound of sugar for five cents. If that is the right price, there should be no more sugar than precisely a pound and no more money than five cents. More sugar for five cents is demoralizing to the best development of honest business, more money either exacted or voluntarily given is equally unwise.

This business transaction in sugar and all like transactions must be regarded as part of a system of human living. It is not a solitary and unrelated act in which generosity on one side and liberality on the other in Christian love might have play. The system, in the words of Henry George, "is like a highly organized animal extremely sensitive in every part. Shocks and jars from which a primitive community easily recovers would, to a highly organized community, mean wreck." This system requires equal and exact justice which will develop accuracy in business; ability in management; it will stimulate

Digitized by Google

the product to its perfecting; it will give opportunities to neighbors in the same business to prosper, and it will promote manly self-effort and good character.

Any deviation toward generosity from strict equity in business is detrimental. It pauperizes the recipient and harms the giver's finer character. It lowers the self-respect and self-reliance of the man who receives more than his due and may cause him to relax strenuous endeavor to succeed; thus doing him serious damage in the end. Generosity and looseness in business dealings is a kindness which kills. It is giving which is blessed neither to the giver nor to the receiver.

Justice includes honesty and veracity. Henry Clay Trumbull[1] has conclusively answered in the negative the question, "Is a lie ever justifiable?" There must be unswerving veracity in everything said to the man with whom we are dealing, yet we are under no moral obligation to tell men everything about any matter, nor anything at all about many matters. It would be contradictory to argue that it is our duty to tell men truths which concern only our personal rights or which concern others than the man in question. It is only when the man is so concerned that harm will come to him if he does not know the things we might tell him that it becomes our duty to inform him.

Christian veracity requires that when we do tell

[1] See Trumbull's "Is a Lie Ever Justifiable?"

Digitized by Google

anything, in justice to a man, it shall be the truth as in a court of justice, — the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. For all our life is in God's court. It is never right to lie to a sane man. A lie saves from one immediate trouble, but it brings seven other troubles worse than the first. We may decline, on grounds of justice and the rights of persons involved, to say anything, but we may not as true Christians speak what is false.

The desire to do justice should become a passion. Mackenzie[1] translates Matt. 5:6 thus: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst for justice." Even Matthew Arnold's idea of religion is "morality touched with emotion." The Christian man in business will hold his honesty and veracity, not as merely negative virtues, but they will be fired with aggressiveness and courage. To be honest and to succeed often requires that one expose the dishonesty of others and heroically fight a bad system. The platform of the International Workingmen's Association which was adopted at Geneva in 1866 is a good one to stand upon — "Truth, justice, and morality as the basis of conduct toward each other and toward all men; the duty of a man to claim the rights of a man and a citizen, not only for himself, but for every man who does his duty; no rights without duties, no duties without rights." [2]

The wise Creator has endowed men with aptitudes

[1] Mackenzie, "Ethics," p. 174.

[2] It is interesting to know that Karl Marx wrote this.

Digitized by Google

for different pursuits, abilities, and tastes so varied that all the vast range of human occupations, beneficial to man, can be kept filled, and filled by men who heartily choose an occupation and are enthusiastic in its prosecution. And all callings that are honest and helpful are as truly Christian work as are prayer, praise, and offerings made as a part of worship. The rending of the veil of the temple at Jerusalem that had for ages made one little place peculiarly holy — the Holy of holies — tore down forever the distinction between the secular and the sacred in work. This did not make worship secular, but it made work also sacred. The torn veil of the temple does not abolish the Holy of holies, but it extends it over the whole earth.

A business obligation, therefore, is sacred. It is the divine assignment to serve some pressing need of our fellowmen. The fabled archangel who was sent down to sweep the street crossing did it thoroughly and helped the old lady across tenderly while his fellow archangel ruled an empire. But what mattered it to them which work they did? It was all for the King of kings, to whom the least service is holy and glorious and acceptable. It was all doing God's will. Let us ask with Henry Drummond: "Are we doing God's will? Not, are we doing God's work — preaching, teaching, or collecting money — but God's *will?* A man may think he is doing God's work when he is not even doing God's will." Every man should be held to the doing of his full part and

Digitized by Google

be rewarded in full. The law of strict equity is the law of Christian love in business.

Christ's statement of the second stage of Christian love is the Golden Rule. Let us get the Golden Rule exactly, for it contains more than has yet been popularly known. This is the way it is given in Matt. 7:12 (American Revision): "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." Luke 6:31 has it: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." This is more than "love thy neighbor as thyself," which requires that you put your neighbor into your place in your thought and regard him as carefully as you regard yourself, giving him the same rights and privileges you demand for yourself. The Golden Rule requires you to put yourself into his place and therefore study his actual condition and needs, and, knowing also your own side, do justice to his from the viewpoint of both sides. The first law of love deals out the same to him as you are taking yourself; the other attempts to deal out exactly what is just to that neighbor whose condition is probably so different from yours. The Golden Rule is love which puts yourself fully into the other man's place in addition to trying to think of him as entitled to the same that you have.

It was not a small matter that Jesus added — that the Golden Rule fulfills not only all the law, but *all the prophets*. The prophets of the Old Testament

Digitized by Google

were the ethical philosophers of Judah and Israel. Their burning messages are being revived for our day and applied to twentieth century conditions with great force. There is something deeply significant in the recent widespread interest in all the Old Testament seers as ethical teachers. It is universally felt that they are no less really spokesmen for God to America and the world to-day.

In what did the prophets advance ethically beyond the law of Moses? By just so much is the Golden Rule an advance upon "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Moses had two tables of the law; the one told of duties to God, the other of duties to man. In form all but two of the ten commandments were negative. They were prohibitions, except the fourth and fifth. Early in the moral growth of the people it was found that the positive form of love was necessary; so loving God with all the mind, heart, and strength was given as the convenient summary of the commandments concerning duties to God. The commandments toward men, however, were not so summarized. It was prophetism which greatly extended the ethical field and intensified the ethical impulse. In one familiar summary[1] we have this result: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" The American Revision makes a change of much interest, "What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness,

[1] Micah 6 : 8.

Digitized by Google

and to walk humbly with thy God?" The "mercy" is not a forgiveness of enemies, but a "kindness" toward all men.

So, in a word, the Golden Rule makes the addition of sympathy to the justice which the law required; or, shall we say, it requires justice in the beautiful spirit of sympathy, the feeling with men which may come from putting ourselves in their place when we deal with them. This is the advance it makes over "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and this advance the prophets were to accomplish, so that the Golden Rule now fulfills the law and also the prophets.

How, then, will the law operate in concrete cases? Let us see. The merchant sells his neighbor an article of clothing. The merchant — if he is capable — knows the quality of the goods, he knows what a fair price for it is, and he knows that his purchaser in this case — and usually — is ignorant of both quality and fair price. The Golden Rule in thought puts the merchant into the place of the customer, but with the merchant's knowledge, and says to him, "If you, the merchant, knowing what you do of this article, were now buying it, how would you want to be treated?" Could anything be conceived more exactly just, practical, and easily applied?

An employer is fixing wages for his workman. The Golden Rule in business says to the employer, "If you were now in the workman's place and knew all you know about the profits of manufacturing and costs, what would you want the employer to pay you

Digitized by Google

in wages?" In other words, looking at both sides, with the manufacturer's knowledge and the workingman's conditions, what is it right to allow?

This is more than a man dealing with another in love as he loves himself, and more even than putting himself into the other man's place. It is putting himself into both places in the transaction so as to secure a complete ethical view, then to accord exactly what is just. The good workingman on his part lives by the Golden Rule when he puts himself into the employer's place, measuring so far as he can his perplexities, losses, risk, and capital invested, and knowing how much honest work and unusually good work will help swell the profits and relieve the burdens, and when he hears the mandate of the Golden Rule, "If you were now the employer what would you like the workman to do? How would you like him to use material, tools, and time?" And the good workingman is shown when he lives up to the self-evident answer he would have to give. Ruskin says impatiently, "When will all workingmen strive to do full honest work with the same zeal with which they ask fair wages?" The easy answer is, "When they live by the Golden Rule."

In professional service, take the teacher in daily work with pupils. The Golden Rule puts the teacher into the pupil's place, but with the teacher's experience and knowledge of what earnest study means and how mental acquisition and ability are attained. The teacher, therefore, doing his duty will stimulate

Digitized by Google

to largest self-effort and give just such assistance and at such times as will most fully develop the pupil's own activity. The physician will treat the patient as he would have the doctor treat him when he is sick, knowing medical practice as he then would know it.

In none of these cases — in no case in business — is the simple demand of the other man the measure of Christian duty. He, not knowing what the manufacturer, merchant, or professional man knows, may ask too little in equity. It is the other man's duty to give him more than he asks, up to the measure of what is just. Or the customer, workman, or patient may demand or expect what is beyond his rights in justice. There is no Christian duty laid down in the Golden Rule of love in business requiring the Christian to grant such demands.

The author does not contend that the Golden Rule has no application except in business. It is a good rule or law for all of life, but for the life beyond business there is a better law of love, as will be shown in the next chapter. Here the plea is made for the Golden Rule as being exactly the law of practical justice in all business, and no conscience should become morbid or feel condemned for not granting in business more than is just. It would be a wrong in the end, as we have seen, to the man receiving more regularly, however grateful he may now be for the generosity. Of course there is a place to be generous to the needy, to give, to lend money, and to help substantially, but such actions would better

Digitized by Google

be distinct always from any business transaction between the parties.

The Golden Rule is opposed to the rule of gold, greed for gold above honesty and veracity.

> Gold, yellow, glittering, precious gold —
> Will make black, white; foul, fair;
> Wrong, right; base, noble; old, young;
> Coward, valiant;
> This yellow slave will knit and break religion,
> Bless the accursed.[1]

"Knighthood in the twelfth century was for God and the ladies, but no knighthood in labor nor toward labor."[2]

The Golden Rule is equally opposed to easy-going favoritism. Take again the merchant and his customer for clothing and suppose the merchant sells the article far below cost or even at cost. He cannot do that to every purchaser and continue in business. Thus his act is a piece of favoritism which, if done to several persons, must necessarily be distributed in increased cost to the rest of his customers. He is taking from them to hand over to the insistent clamorers for special privilege, — robbing many Peters to pay a few Pauls. The employer who pays large wages to a few favorites is equally guilty, for to do this he shaves the wages of the rest. Anyone who is familiar with actual conditions in the business world grants that it is difficult to adjust

[1] Shakspere, "Timon of Athens."
[2] Crafts, "Practical Christian Sociology," p. 370.

Digitized by Google

wages equitably, but many wrongs might be righted and should be righted at once. It is always necessary first to see what is right and then steer that way.

The perplexing question of what is a fair price or what is a just wage is not settled conscientiously when we adopt current prices or wages. Prices may be too low and wages too high, or, what is more likely, prices may be too high and wages too low; for both current prices and current wages are fixed by the thoroughly unscrupulous, and competition finds it easiest to follow such a lead. In these days of actual combinations, or at least understanding between the parties, prices are too high in most cases. In the recent times of unscrupulous competition, when prices were cut by dishonest adulterations, false labels, and short weights and measures, the Christian merchant refused to follow the lead, but frankly exposed such frauds and always gave the square deal himself. He was able to defend his higher prices as fair and just. It is an inspiring omen of better days that many such business men, sustained by an enlightened public, are succeeding. Such men are a refreshing contrast to others whose success is tainted with dishonor. There is too much truth in the words of R. F. Horton, "What is called success in business, in literature, in society, in politics and public life, and horrible as it is to say it, what is called success in the church and in religious work, is sometimes purchased by a subtle and sinister com-

Digitized by Google

promise with evil as definite as the compact by which a medieval witch purchased the power of the moment by the sale of her immortal soul." [1]

Manhood maintained and perfected in business is richer than money made, and manhood wants nothing but justice in daily business or toil. It scorns generosity. As Sismondi says, "What! is wealth then everything? Are men absolutely nothing?"

> Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates and men decay.[2]

Rather be

> King by mere manhood now allowing aught
> Of holier unction than the sweat of toil.[3]

The best work of Sir Humphrey Davy, he loved to assert, was not the invention of the safety lamp for the miner, but the discovery of Michael Faraday for the world of science.

Business life in Christian ethics has two main relations between the parties concerned to which the Golden Rule applies:

1. In business a man may be the seeker of the service which another can give him, as when a purchaser seeks goods from a merchant, an employer seeks labor from a workman, a sick man healing from the physician, a student help in learning from a teacher. The Golden Rule requires in each case that such pay should be given by the seeker as he would

[1] "Success and Failure."
[2] Goldsmith, "Deserted Village."
[3] Lowell.

Digitized by Google

desire for himself if the positions were reversed — knowing also his own side and having love, with sympathy, for the other.

2. On the other hand a man may offer service to others — something he manufactures, sells, transports, or can give professionally. The Golden Rule now requires him to furnish such goods or service as would satisfy him if he were the recipient — knowing also what he knows as giver.

Subsidiary to these main relations, in the vast development of daily work, have sprung up other relations between men in the same business or profession in the same community, employers with other employers prosecuting the same or interrelated business, workmen with fellow workmen, employers with their workmen in the factory, as they seek to fall in line with the great profits-sharing movements.

What does Christian ethics declare about these relations?

First, concerning employer and employees in the same factory. They stand together as partners in a common service to mankind. This is ethically the best of all unions, whether it leads to profits-sharing or not. It is a "perpendicular" division in the labor world which promotes best service, and not the "horizontal" division of all employers united in one body above and all workmen of different factories united in one body below. The latter promoted caste feeling and class distinctions and antagonisms, which are obnoxious in America.

Digitized by Google

Some were made to starve and toil,
Some to share the wine and oil,
We are told,
Devil's theories are these,
Stifling hope and love and peace,
Framed your hideous lusts to please.[1]

The employer and workmen together in one factory form a scientific solidarity in business which promotes best service, insures industrial development and peace and largest profits. So Le Claire, the French pioneer in profits-sharing, and many others have shown. There are good reasons for additional associations after this best one of all workmen in one business and all workmen in every business, and also for the union of all owners and employers. There are problems on each side, certain helpful development in efficiency, a conservation of rights, and a general brotherliness possible in these associations. If actually these are not attained, that is reason for changing the forms and methods of the union or association, but not for abolishing them.

Actual relations at present between men leading in any business or profession are one of three kinds:

1. There is destructive or demoralizing competition between these men.

What shall be said from the Christian point of view about competition as now carried to extremes in the few businesses where competition yet has play? Such competition must be distinguished from that able and aggressive enterprise in business which

[1] Lowell, "Hunger and Cold."

Digitized by Google

seeks to render the ideal service at lowest prices. This enterprise is what the many competition-protecting statutes of our states and the National Congress fully expected to result. Results were for a while beneficial; when the prices were just or reasonable and business was honorably conducted competition was laudable. To be sure those who were giving inferior service were oppressed and some of them were driven out of business. But such things will come in consequence of superior service in any line of human activity. The best physician will after a while take the practice of the incompetent man, the better teacher will get more and better students, and the more enterprising merchant will have the larger trade. There is no right way to save the idle and unfit in any forward march. So long as competition is an honorable struggle for more excellent things to deal to fellowmen it is not only a mark of higher civilization, but it is just as much a mark of real Christianity. It will be best in the end even for the whole tribe of laggards themselves. The Golden Rule is fulfilled by the leader who causes these changes, for his methods have brought about for others exactly what he would desire to have done to him if he were lazy or unprogressive; he would want the stirring of soul which real progress gives to the slower members.

But, taking the country over, competition has failed to do the good expected of it, and it will evidently soon become a thing of the past. It became

Digitized by Google

a cut-throat struggle, brutally selfish, unscrupulous, and unrelenting. It was planned rather to drive neighbors to the wall than to improve the service. It was against men, not for the good of all men. Where it still persists, it is a savage warfare no less cruel than scalping or cannibalism. Its usual motives and methods absolutely ignore the Golden Rule.

It is unlikely that the man who starts to ruin his neighbor in business will continue honest and scrupulous in the quality of his goods and in his weights and measures. His temptations to dishonest things become fierce, and swindling methods are his effective weapons. If he has started to ruin one man, why should it be thought he will hesitate to rob others? What wonder if competitors, in many cases, resort to the same wickedness? So the general tone of business is lowered, and the consumer, who was supposed to be the favored man by the law of competition, now is most wronged.

2. The oppressive combination or trust is now the usual evolution of every business in a few years. Fierce competition is practically abandoned in many lines because shrewd experience has shown that combinations are more profitable and more comfortable. These trusts have become gigantic; they have, often, a complete monopoly of their products or their service. They raise prices beyond all fairness and justice, so that they have rightfully been characterized by state and national laws as conspiracies against the public welfare. The law of supply and

Digitized by Google

demand is not operative to correct the oppression when the supply is all regulated by one combination and the demand represents an ever growing necessity.

Christian ethics must regard all unjust prices as so much robbery of men, all the more reprehensible because the monopoly has rendered men helpless to resist. All individuals in the trust are personally responsible to God. The serviceable decision of Sir Edward Coke "that corporations have no souls" is vicious. The men in the corporation have souls and, what is more to the purpose of justice, they have bodies, which the law is finding and visiting with punishment for these crimes of business. "The man is the criminal in every case" is now the decision of a righteous judge. These oppressions are monstrous when they deal with the necessities of the poorest poor. Even Robin Hood would not despoil the poor.

3. Slowly there is evolving a genuine Christian coöperation. The groups of coöperative farmers in the south of Ireland under the noble leadership of Sir Horace Plunkett, the wonderfully successful groups in Denmark, in France, and now many in America, are the true brotherhood in business. They already cover production, marketing, banking, and mercantile enterprise. About forty farmers constitute a working group. One man is made purchaser of supplies for all; thus the troublesome middleman is eliminated. One man manages the marketing of all products, others manage the mer-

Digitized by Google

chandising and banking in trusteeships for the group. This permits individual initiative, the largest use of special ability, and the power of combination without injustice or oppression. Moreover, it promotes the best motives and brotherly character of all. It is true Christianity up to the modern spirit using the latest great opportunities of civilization. It is better from the standpoint of character development and individual power and satisfaction to conscience than state socialism, which in the countries named it is rapidly displacing in the popular mind. It is better than individual competition because it seeks the prosperity of all by all, and is most successful when all are doing well. It is the most significant social movement of the times in the industries.[1] While thus far applied chiefly to farming communities it is plainly just as practicable for towns and even cities, to which it is surely working its way.

Professional life — in medicine, law, teaching, journalism, in the ministry, and in statecraft — has its well-defined ethics. The physician must not advertise nor trench upon his fellow practitioner in unguarded utterances reflecting upon him. He must treat the poorest poor with the same devotion as the millionaire patient. So the code continues. There is a peculiarly delicate relation between physician and physician which should be conscientiously preserved, but the duty to the patient and to the patient class surely is paramount. The physician lives to serve

[1] John Graham Brooks, "Lectures at Chautauqua," N. Y., 1909.

Digitized by Google

the patient, not to defend the bad work of a fellow practitioner, except within certain limits, as when there is possibility of error made in good faith or because of present imperfect knowledge, for then the standing and *esprit de corps* of the profession are involved.

No class of professional men — not even the minister of the gospel — has such a high and self-denying spirit as the doctor of medicine. The great work physicians have done in preventive measures, in thorough sanitation, in the stamping out of epidemics and contagious diseases, and in popular teaching of more healthful living, has already seriously cut into the income of many physicians. Yet the physicians themselves are leading in all that means reduced amount of sickness, to their own pecuniary loss. The skillfully drawn portrait of Doctor MacLure in "The Bonnie Brier Bush" captured the heart of the world for physicians in general. All honor to the unworldly men, and God's blessing upon their efforts to banish all diseases and causes of disease.

But what shall be thought of a combination of physicians for absolute mutual protection against legal suits for malpractice? Doubtless the physician is peculiarly liable to blackmail, and attendance at court, win or lose, is extremely costly to him, as the blackmailer knows only too well. But surely, if the trust of physicians makes itself responsible for the unqualified legal defense of every kind of practitioner and renders difficult if not impossible the

Digitized by Google

securing of necessary medical testimony to a wrong done, in every case it should make a full investigation of its own and make some adjustment of the just claims of a man seriously injured by reckless malpractice. Instead of this, the first effect of the legal medical trust is to make reckless in experimentation a certain characterless class of surgeons, and then, when these do lifelong harm, the combination puts the entire burden upon the unfortunate patient. Fortunately this class of surgeons is small, but the cases are numerous enough to demand that the conscientious doctor be protected against them.

On the other hand, probably no class of professional men suffer more from the repudiation of their just claims than the physicians. Surely, if any bill is to be paid first, it should be the bill of the man who stood between us or our loved ones and disease or death, often at great personal risk and always oblivious of his comfort and expense. Here the Golden Rule comes in.

The Christian minister has a business relation to his church. He is in duty bound to give definite service for his salary. He has no overseer in the employment of his time, there is usually no specification of duties in his week-day work, and if he is easy of conscience about it, he can do a minimum of actual work for a long time before his day of retribution dawns. He is peculiarly tempted to moral and intellectual sloth, and he ought to be held to full returns for his pay as all other men are.

Digitized by Google

The relation of lawyer to client is more complex. The attorney-at-law is also an officer of the court of justice, duly sworn to uphold the law. He must be faithful in advocating the cause of his client, but there can be no obligation to tell falsehoods nor to attempt to frustrate justice. Christian lawyers, like the great Abraham Lincoln, may be true to the highest moral ideals, either as counselors to business men or as advocates in criminal defense. When they take the defense of an accused man, even one whom they know to be guilty, they should secure for him every legal right, but never more than this. "Ideal, indeed! but impracticable!" says some lawyer who has a large criminal court practice or is counsel for an iniquitous trust, whose unscrupulous lying and jury influencing has turned loose upon the community gangs of thieves and murderers. And this lawyer, like a certain notorious lawyer in a large city, "of whose health every scoundrel first inquired before he began his crimes," is justly regarded the most serious menace to life and property in his city. Fortunately a few only of such criminal lawyers can make large fees, for many criminals are poor, and the rich corporations of criminal character employ only the political lawyers.

Who can measure the responsibility of the journalist or author in these days? The circulation of daily newspapers, of the monthlies and great weeklies, and of the book that wins popularity is enormous. How great the opportunity here. The writer must

Digitized by Google

consider his relation to his reader and to the man and measures of the day. His readers look to him for sincere, unbiased statements of fact and truth. They want able and helpful editorial discussions. It is no defense to say that because the reader of the newspaper pays only one cent, and of the magazine only ten cents, while the cost is much greater, therefore he has no right to demand full consideration in all discussions. Readers who pay the subscription price make possible the advertising revenue which brings rich profits. The business obligation to render just service is upon editors and authors no less than upon day laborers. The service rendered may be intangible, but real and clearly defined in general conscience. The newspaper, the magazine, and the book of every kind are under the Golden Rule, the law of Christian love which enjoins justice with sympathy.

Digitized by Google

III

THE LAW OF LOVE FOR THE LARGER CHRISTIAN LIFE

CHRISTIAN civilization is yet only a "thin veneer over barbarism" and animalism. There is distressing proof of the thinness of this veneer in the fact that the life of self-support and personal acquisition, which we first considered as the foundation of individual power, added to the business life which is necessary for the orderly supply of man's immediate needs, are regarded so generally as the largest part of life. Many, indeed, regard these things as the whole of life. But in Christ's thought they are only the foundations of the splendid temple which every man is to erect.

Self-conservation builds the magnificent steamship of human nature in keel and prow, in decks and saloons, staterooms, quarterdeck and wheelhouse, in engines and screws and luxurious accommodations. The business life stocks the coal bunkers, the steward's larders, and the life-saving appliances. But to the great liner there is now the vast ocean of life before it, there are the living passengers crowding the dock to occupy her cabins and staterooms, and there is the

Digitized by Google

great cargo to be carried. What was the great ship constructed for? What is her life purpose?

Now after full self-development and business life is real life to begin. The steamer is at the dock, steam is up, whither will she sail, and with what cargo and passengers?

True Christian life of Christlike proportions is lived after the day's work ends. It is lived on Sundays, on holidays, festal days, and during other intermissions from hard toil. When right conditions at last prevail in the labor and business world, probably five hours a day, with all men working at their best and all working steadily, will supply all the needs of mankind. The trend of the times has been to diminish the hours of toil and enlarge the evening, the time of larger life. Days for recreation and for higher pursuits are multiplying. "The long evening of civilization has come!" With the development of brilliant oil lamps, gas and electric light in homes and streets, the day is eighteen hours long. Thus, even now, a half day is given for the larger life. Soon the proportions between the hours of labor and the hours devoted to the larger life will be reversed, and the half day will be for self-support, and a whole day of ten hours out of twenty-four will be for keeping step with Christ in his kingdom's onward progress. What we do between the evening meal and midnight is what will count hereafter. No one, not even on the farm, now goes to bed at candlelight. The candle itself is a curious relic.

Digitized by Google

It must be emphasised, of course, that Christ's thought of life includes daily toil as Christian service, and that opportunities for character perfecting abound in the world of labor and professional life; that while, in the daily work itself, strict ethical justice is the wise Christian law, during the daily intercourse of man with man many opportunities for the Christly love of sacrifice appear. The true Christian can live his larger life all the time. Phillips Brooks says: "Let each day's commonest act be an act that has an aim and does it, and it shall make us wonder to see it dignified by that aim, and cured of all its commonness. Every honest occupation is to be considered as the channel of utterance of the divine life in the character and soul."

Heeding truth alone, and turning
From the false and dim,
Lamp of toil or altar burning
Are alike to Him.[1]

Yet in fullest measure the larger life is lived after the daily toil. Then come the sweet relations of the home; the fellowships and activities of good society; the tender personal friendships like those of David and Jonathan, of Damon and Pythias, of Alfred Tennyson and Arthur Hallam; then attention can be given to the meetings, movements, and opportunities of the church, the reforms and philanthropies of the age, the associated movements for research and learning, the missionary propaganda in all forms

[1] Whittier, "The Lumberman."

Digitized by Google

of Christendom to the world, the neighborhood development in all higher civilization.

Workingmen whose hours of duty are irregular — like railroaders, street-car employees, policemen, firemen, watchmen — are rightly seeking to have adjustments made that will afford definite leisure time for home and beyond. The great movement of workingmen for a Sunday rest day started in Wisconsin some years ago, which has now spread all over America and is growing more insistent and strenuous in its demands, is a most promising sign of the times. It expresses the deeper love for home, the growing sense of responsibility for the children, and the desire for participation in the larger privileges of civilization. Christian civilization must second this demand for a universal weekly rest day and must adjust its activities to it, at least in such a way as to make Sunday work a minimum of the strictest necessity. For society becomes self-destructive when its development takes the father from the family life. The boy, the future father and worker, needs the father's presence, sympathy, and companionship when he is between eight and fifteen years of age. Then is the time of awakening life and the reason for the beginnings of habit formation and marvelous acquisition of knowledge. Of what avail is the support of the boy's physical life if his moral character is dwarfed and he becomes a criminal or a beast? A home atmosphere of refinement, happiness, moral keenness, and purity is to be created, home appliances

Digitized by Google

for child-training must be provided, blessed home fellowships are to be formed, and the father is needed just as much as the mother. We have been impressed with the sadness of home without a mother, but our homes sorely suffer for being without fathers. Business must come first, men say; but business for what? For the very home which by business is robbed of its best. Business must be slavishly attended to, they insist; but what for? To provide for that home material luxuries at the cost of being fatherless.

In this larger Christian life we reach the third law of love in Christian living, the law of Christly love, loving others as he loved us. Let us get it exactly. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."[1] It is a distinctly new commandment, in that respect differing from "Love thy neighbor as thyself," which was simply a well-known summary of the law, and differing from the Golden Rule which Jesus said summed up the law and the prophetic ethical development in addition. In statement the Golden Rule was new, a marvelous single sentence that contains all taught before Christ. In substance it was old, so Christ claims no originality for it.

But for the law of love he now enjoins, he claims a place; it is the eleventh commandment, a real addition to the law and the prophets. And his love, which

[1] John 13 : 34.

Digitized by Google

is now set as the model for good people, was not only a fuller love, a greater love than had ever been known in the past; it was a new kind of love, which Paul said is immeasurable, whose height and depth and length and breadth pass knowledge. It was a love that made Christ, though infinitely rich in heaven beyond man's wildest imagination, ready to assume voluntary poverty, becoming poorer than the poorest. He chose to be a helpless baby in an oriental peasant woman's arms, who brought him into the world in a stable and laid him in a manger. For our sakes he came; not after the manner of incarnations in the ancient mythology, leaping a full-grown man into the world, but as a helpless baby, unable to speak or walk. Then the life of poverty, obscurity, struggle, misunderstanding, rejection, loneliness unimaginable; of scorned love, of stupid people, of petty things that pierced worse than thorns, of selfish clashings; the life that repaid his benevolence with persecution, his wise teachings with ridicule, his heart-moving appeals with bitterness; the life that came amid the privations, narrowness, and slowness of the first century instead of choosing to come in America in the twentieth century; that began among the beasts of the stall and ended with thieves on the cross; descended with death into a grave; dying amid execrations of priests, howls of a frenzied populace, the shame of a public execution as a condemned criminal, the cruelty of heathen soldiers, the sobbings of a heart-broken mother and one lone disciple.

Digitized by Google

What kind of love is this? Its innermost character and essence is a limitless sacrifice. The law of love for the larger Christian life is nothing less than a love which is wholly characterized by limitless sacrifice.

Now for a moment let us recall the three laws of love. First there is the love prescribed by the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," a measured love by the scale of one's own rights and demands. This is the love that keeps the law which commands that we do no harm to another; the love for self-conservation of life which enjoins perfect harmlessness to all others, putting them also into our place to be guarded as we guard ourselves. Second, there is the love indicated by the command, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them likewise." This is also a measured love, but it calls for the putting of oneself into the other's place and studying his needs in full justice and veracity. This is the love that adds practical sympathy in our giving of justice to all men, that is just by a complete view of both sides in our dealings. The third and highest love is that which comes through sacrifice, limitless self-sacrifice.

The love of Christ is to be the law for our life. That love is self-denying: it loves my neighbor more than myself. It is unmeasuring in its activities: it does more for others than it ever expects others to do unto itself. This Christly love is far beyond the sense of duty alone which Kant[1] philosophizes about

[1] Quoted by Dewey and Tufts, "Ethics," p. 349.

Digitized by Google

as the only virtue, a duty usually unpleasant, but to be done in heroic spirit. Schiller keenly ridicules it in verse:

> Gladly serve I my friends but I do it, alas! with affection,
> Hence I've a gnawing suspicion that I am not virtuous.

He imagines Kant saying:

> Help except this there is none, you must seek to despise them,
> And with horror perform whatever the law has commanded.

But what if Kant's sense of duty has back of it, infilling it, the love of Christ? It will be no less duty, but even in sacrifice unto death it will be joy. For, as Drummond says, love is always joy and beauty and life:

> Straight is the line of duty,
> Curved is the line of beauty.

But draw the line of duty straight on round the world and it is the glorious curve of ideal moral beauty.

Christly love is more than the Golden Rule, it is the rule of the Pearl of Great Price. The love of the family of God, of the great friendships of men beyond home or kinship. It is the love of the true Christian home which makes it heaven on earth; the love of kinship which has become the warmest friendship; and of friendship which has grown into soulful fellowship, and fellowship into a partnership in all good works, and partnerships into the solidarity of the kingdom of God extended into all human life.

In this larger life the local Christian church, when it returns to consciousness as the real body of Christ

Digitized by Google

and becomes vitalized in every member, will perform a large part. It is ridiculously undeveloped now when the average local church sets only one in ten of its people to any specified work; enlists only one in three in systematic giving; when only one in six is interested in Christ's world-wide kingdom, and not one in fifty is doing any personal work in winning men to Christ. Because of these facts the church is doing only a feeble kind of spiritual work, only a little social developing, very small intellectual stimulating, and is responsible for no scientific moral culture. The children of this world are so much wiser than the children of light!

The only way men of the world manage to get people in a factory to do their best work is to organize them until the last individual is set to the work best suited to his abilities. The only way armies win strenuous campaigns is by a wonderful organization which takes account of the last soldier and the last factor which bears on fighting efficiency. It is the way of all civilization, except the belated church, to plan a thorough organization, develop all resources, coördinate officers, supervise with care, and then move forward with power. How foolish, then, to depreciate organization in the church or to insist that the church is already over-organized! Those who make such statements would better rub their Rip Van Winkle eyes and do as Christ bids them—learn of the people outside who are doing things. The local church is in many cases rapidly disinte-

Digitized by Google

grating. At best it adds but a few converts from a teeming world of sinners. What is accomplished is due largely to the activity of the pastor or leader, for in many churches he is the chief if not the only real worker.

If the good that Christ did is to be the model for his church, surely there is nothing helpful to man in any way, whether material, intellectual, moral, spiritual, esthetic, or social, which the church ought not to include in her programme of service. The church's work is not "to hold her own" simply, but to capture humanity and all its interests for Christ.

The way to begin this is to possess the love of Christ. That will constrain Christians to become like Paul, who felt its power in his inmost soul; like Livingstone and the modern leaders in philanthropy, reform, missions, and evangelism; like the Salvation Army.

Let us analyze the limitless sacrifice of this love more thoroughly. It is a sincere, warm love for man as man—the deepest love; a love that goes forth seeking all men; a love that regards a man, any man, with passionate desire to save him; a love that suffers for men, with men, from men, "suffereth long and is kind."

Christ came from heaven and went into the depths of human life because he had this love. He describes it in the parables of the Shepherd, the Woman, the Prodigal's Father. He commands his disciples, in the strength of him who gives this love, to go into all the world and find every creature.

Digitized by Google

Those who have this love, love men because they are men. So David Livingstone loved the wretched black man of Africa; John Howard loved the degraded criminal in the dungeon; Father Damien and Mary Reed loved the infectious leper; Florence Nightingale loved the roughest soldier; Charles Crittenden loved his fallen sisters; Jerry McAuley loved the drunken tramp; General Booth loved the crushed and stunted and degraded slum dweller. These all really loved as a mother loves her child, as Wendell Phillips, John Brown, and John G. Whittier loved the slave.

Let Whittier speak [1] for them all:

> What, ho! *our* countrymen in chains!
> The whip on WOMAN'S shrinking flesh!
> Our soil yet reddening with the stains,
> Caught from her scourging, warm and fresh!
> What! mothers from their children riven!
> What! God's own image bought and sold!
> AMERICANS to market driven,
> And bartered as the brute for gold!
>
> A Christian! going, gone!
> Who bids for God's own image? — for his grace
> Which that poor victim of the market place
> Hath in her suffering won?
> My God! can such things be?
> Hast thou not said that whatsoe'er is done
> Unto thy weakest and thy humblest one,
> Is even done to thee?

This is no academic altruism nor fine philosophic humanitarianism. It is the warm red heart's love

[1] Whittier, "Our Countrymen in Chains" and "The Christian Slave."

Digitized by Google

that sweats drops of blood for its own, the "enthusiasm for humanity" for its own sake, because it has the vision of love for it, seeing divine possibilities in the image yet divine, however sin-cursed and crushed into the beast or demonlike.

Is this too lofty to be practical as a law of love? Nay; we have come to a day when the ideal is the most practical, when this very love of Christ is conquering the world. Nothing short of this kind of love has enthusiasm in it, or perseverance, or capacity for suffering in the fierce battles it invokes, or can be another of the martyrs, should need arise.

> Hurt as it may, love on, love forever;
> Love for love's sake, like the Father above,
> But for whose brave-hearted Son we had never
> Known the sweet hurt of the sorrowful love.[1]

The love for God with all the mind, soul, and strength is the fountain for this neighbor love, for the love of the Golden Rule, and for the Christly love. These are the successive developments of love for God working out toward man. Its final form is the Christly love of the limitless sacrifice, for that is the love of God shown in Christ in its fullness.

> Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the cords with might,
> Smote the cord of self, that trembling passed in music out of sight.[2]

[1] George MacDonald. [2] Tennyson.

Digitized by Google

IV

THE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF CONSCIENCE

THE perception of rightness or wrongness in an act, like the visual perception of color and form in an object, is a simple and elemental human sense. Like sight and hearing, the moral sense is probably, in final analysis, simply a matter of clear consciousness; but this is enough for sight and hearing, and may well be to any sincere man for conscience, as to its reality and validity. This inner power, called conscience, is the perceptive organ of the moral nature. It acts spontaneously when confronted by man's voluntary actions, words, feelings, and motives, in the light of what ethical standard it may have, just as physical sight sees and must use whatever is at hand — candle-, gas-, electric-, or lime-light — in seeing.

Conscience settles finally on motives and purpose. The intention of the man in any act or word or feeling is the real objective of conscience and to that it instinctively seeks to penetrate. The motive or intention is now universally recognized, even in state and national laws on crime and in judicial decisions, as

Digitized by Google

the moral character of an act. In crimes, however, the need of also regarding results has long caused confusion concerning motive. Through long ages we have finally come to clear up this confusion. For example, in the code of Hammurabi (the king Amraphel of Genesis), dating before Abraham we have this curious law: "If a physician operate on a man with a bronze lancet for a severe wound and cause the man's death, or open an abscess and destroy the man's eye, they shall cut off his fingers." But long ages later, in early German and English law, the owner of a weapon left to be repaired at a smith's, was punished if the weapon was stolen and used to do harm.[1] Also, whole families were destroyed, women and children included, for the sins or crime of the father; indeed whole tribes were at times destroyed for an injury by one of their number. It is because of like confusion of thinking that the child retaliates for an injury wholly unintentional.

Conscience (*con-scio*) is, literally, *knowing with.*[2] There is then a twofold knowledge,—knowing an act and knowing its moral quality according to a moral standard. This is the meaning also of the equivalent German term, *Gewisse,* and the old English, *inwit.* It is consciousness of the moral quality of an act and of the moral law.

[1] Dewey and Tufts, "Ethics," p. 105.

[2] Prof. Amos R. Wells says, "My conscience is that whereby I know with (scio-con) God. It warns, condemns, approves, comforts, cheers when God would. It is a representative of God."

Digitized by Google

"It is intention that gives character to an act. A and B both give to C a piece of money. A gives it with the intention of procuring the murder of a man; B to relieve a family in distress. The act is the same, the intention gives its character as right or wrong." [1]

Conscience is often confused with the entire moral nature. But there are several other factors in the moral nature of man. There is the will, the executive of the soul; the impulses to good or evil from predispositions, weakness, or strength; moral habits already formed; the motives felt and adopted; the circumstances of the particular act; the measure of knowledge of the Christian law as the ideal good. Schliermacher names three ideas as all comprehensive in the moral life: the *good*, meaning the standard for human moral actions; *duty*, the sense of obligation which includes conscience and more, and *virtue*, the subjective result in the person doing the good as his duty. All these factors and ideas are often confounded under the name conscience, and it becomes of the highest practical importance, and not merely an academic question, to define the scope and limitations of conscience itself. Then we shall know what to expect of our own and other people's consciences; we shall know what factors morally to train, and how to train them, and thus make steady progress in good habits and good character.

Let us examine, therefore, several popular definitions of conscience.

[1] Wayland, "Moral Science," p. 31.

Digitized by Google

John Calvin's definition was said to be "Conscience is the sense of divine imperial justice." This is very impressive, but to what conscience is, it adds also the maturely educated moral nature, the large knowledge of Christian law, and also faith in the absolute righteousness of God. Then it confuses divine justice, which applies to God's acts alone, with righteousness, which is the standard for human actions. God only can have a true sense of his own justice. Indeed, to man's view, and even to conscience, it often appears as if God were not just, so that conscience is then really a sense of God's injustice. Of course Christian faith believes God is always good and wise and right; but this is faith, and we have no full perception of his justice such as a sense of it would give. The conscience of man, moreover, is the sense of human actions by their intentions, good or evil, judged by Christian law when known.

Martin Luther's definition of conscience seems closer to its real nature and scope, but is still in need of careful examination. He says, "Conscience is the consciousness of duty," mixing several moral factors into one. The duty is what conscience sees, and it implies a moral law which is outside of the soul defining the duty, and an act which will comply with the law. Then come the motives or general purpose the man has in view in the action, and these motives or intentions are also recognized by conscience as good or evil.

Digitized by Google

In short, duty is the object which conscience sees and feels, just as truth is the object which the intellect sees and feels by its reasoning; beauty the object which the esthetic taste sees and feels; God the object which faith knows in the religious nature, and some friend the object which love knows in the emotional nature. Duty is like the material object of form and color which the eyes behold. The conscience is the organ of the moral nature, the eye which sees the grand proportions of duty, the hand which grasps it as men touch an electric health machine and are thrilled by it.

Why is this discrimination vitally important? Because when we recognize duty as the object which conscience as a perception sees, we will be able to enlarge and perfect our idea of duty in well-defined manner and we will know also how to train conscience. Until we recognize the distinction, confused as it is in Luther's definition, we shall not know where to begin moral progress.

As duty is an object outside of conscience, to be known only by this special moral organ, just as beauty is only known by the esthetic taste, this duty can be enlarged, clarified, and perfected. It is the moral law as seen by conscience and felt by it, and as we study the moral law, either by ethical discussions or as revealed in the Scriptures, the sense of it grows. A study of the "meaningful" words and ideas of the moral life is illuminating. Words seem, indeed, in their origin and history to be living things. They

Digitized by Google

are so closely related to living beings, the children of their brains and souls, that the words themselves seem to be born, grow, and decay. Like children they unconsciously reveal very much of their wonderful parentage which is the inner nature or complex natures of the living man.

We are concerned now, of course, with the significant ideas of the moral nature:

DUTY, that is, due-ty, something we owe. In the Christian life it is made up of the detailed items of the bill God has charged against us in his account book, the Bible. Conscience looks over the bill and acknowledges the items correct and just.

OBLIGATION—of which the root is *ligo*, to bind, *ob*, over or against—to bind one over to another. The same root, *ligo*, is in "religion" with *re*, again: which makes "religion" mean binding over twice—once morally and then spiritually, shall we say? But even if this is fancy, the meaning of "obligation" is clear.

RESPONSIBILITY, the answerableness of man to something or some one. Here a call to do something is implied and the response is required. The word "respond" comes from *spondere*, to promise, *re*, again—to promise back to him who speaks.

OUGHT, "the weightiest word in the universe"[1]—that is, weighty to a good man—is also derived from the idea "owe"; Anglo-Saxon, *ahte*, from *agan*, to owe.

MORALS are *mores*, customs or usages; ETHICS, the Greek equivalent, from *ethos*, meaning the same.

[1] Joseph Cook, Boston Monday Lectures, "Conscience."

Digitized by Google

But this meaning is not unworthy, as it seems, when we think of the customs or usages being authoritative or those of ideal men and women, which is probably its real sense.

VIRTUE is from *vir*, the Latin for the ideal man, and signifies ideal manhood, or being the good man.

RIGHTEOUSNESS, JUSTICE, and GOODNESS explain themselves. It is said that the idea of the good, or, in the German, *guth*, has an intensive force not known in the classic languages by any full equivalent.

Dean French, in his 'Study of Words," says: "Conscience is not merely that which I know, but that which I know *with some one else;* for this prefix cannot, I think, be esteemed superfluous or taken to imply merely that which I knew with or to myself. The other knower whom the word implies is God, *his law* making itself known and felt in the heart; in the words of Dr. South[1] 'Conscience, according to the very notation of it, importing a double or joint knowledge—to wit, one of a divine law or rule, and the other of a man's own action—and so properly the application of a general law to a particular instance of practice.'" Dr. Davis declares, "Conscience is pure reason discerning moral law. . . The moral impulse is not conscience, but is conditioned upon the pure intuition of the law." If we substitute "perception" for "reason" this is a very fine definition as far as it goes. "Reason" does not "discern," as we know, but perception does, and the

Digitized by Google

definition is morally valuable in its discrimination of the moral impulse.

This moral impulse is most frequently said to be conscience. That there is such a moral impulse in a good man to do the act, after conscience decides it is right, is well known. But it is in good men, not in the wicked, however clearly these men perceive the right. Their dominant impulse is always to the evil. So Professor Bowne[1] says: "After having unfolded the ideals of character and conduct, we find men practically indifferent to them. Then we have to begin the study of moral and spiritual dynamics." This last sentence reveals the importance of knowing that the moral impulse does not come directly from conscience and explains our failures with men when we trust to anything in a clear conscience simply and do not further develop "moral and spiritual dynamics."

In good men, of course, after conscience decides the right, the impulse is toward it, but this impulse is plainly from good habits of righteousness already formed; from appetites, aspirations, or other predispositions in the soul, and from the sense of obligation to God and his law. Wayland[2] says the impulse of conscience is in the "ought" it arouses, "It is right to tell the truth and I *ought* to tell it." This "ought," however, is the sense of obligation back of conscience in the moral nature, where it exists. As Wayland

[1] Bowne, "Principles of Ethics."
[2] Wayland, "Moral Science," p. 88.

Digitized by Google

says later, "Conscience is sometimes so disordered as not to feel the obligation."

All these writers are talking of a good conscience in a mature Christian moral nature. So Kant speaks of duty: "Duty! thou great, thou exalted name! Wondrous thought, that workest neither by forced insinuation, flattery, nor any threat, but merely by holding thy naked law in the soul!" But to some men a paltry threat or a strong passion knocks all the sense of duty they have out of their souls.

Conscience is the clear unimpassioned judge and not the executive of the moral nature. The will of man, so vital a part of his moral nature, is the executive, and habits, appetites, passions, and the whole moral character itself are simply grooves of former executive action of the will, repeated many times, into which it easily drops again, and starts to move by the well-known force of habit, whatever the decision of conscience at the time. Every man who turns from an evil life to the good is conscious of the impulse downward after he sees the right, and he must make tremendous executive will action upward. Or,

> "I see the right and I approve it too,
> I see the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

"Christian perfection extends chiefly to the will, which is the capital moral power of the soul; leaving the understanding ignorant of ten thousand things." [1]

[1] John Fletcher.

Digitized by Google

So is it equally with those who are good, when tempted to wrong. They feel a tide of impulse setting in their souls toward the right. The bad man feels also at times an impulse to the right, but this is because of former right life. Shakspere's striking passages on conscience are unconsciously Shakspere's own conscience. They are all alike in whatever drama you find them. For instance, one of the murderers[1] of the Duke of Clarence says: "I'll not meddle with it (conscience); it makes a man a coward; a man cannot steal, but it accuseth him; a man cannot swear, but it checks him. 'Tis a blushing, shamefaced spirit that mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills me full of obstacles. It made me once restore a purse of gold, that by chance I found. It beggars anyone that keeps it." All this is the conscience of a man still tender at some points, still under the force of some former habits of doing right. Again[2]:

> The dread of something after death puzzles the will,
> Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all.

But in America, at the time of this writing, there is an epidemic of suicides. Where is the supposed universal dread of something after death in the natural conscience?

> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red.[3]

[1] Richard III, Act I, Sc. 4. [2] Hamlet, Act III. [3] Macbeth.

Digitized by Google

This is Macbeth's conscience. But see the callousness of Lady Macbeth at that time.

An induction of the nature of conscience is not scientifically complete until we take the consciences of different kinds of criminals in action, the actual consciences of bad men in various vices, the conscience of the child, the boy, the youth, and the different kinds of conscience in an average church. Confusion about the confidently expected impulse toward the right when we appeal to wicked men has arisen from the fact that all writers and teachers upon the subject have been good men, as a matter of course, and have taken their own conscience as the norm. They felt the impulse. But take the keen analysis of George Eliot, master student of real conscience: "There is a terrible coercion in our deeds which may first turn the honest man into a deceiver and then reconcile him to the change. And for this reason the second wrong presents itself to him in the guise of the only practicable right."[1] Bulstrode is a pious villain. He explained the gratification of his desire to retain the property he dishonestly possessed into satisfactory agreement with his religion. "There may be coarse hypocrites, who consciously affect beliefs and emotions for the sake of gulling the world, but Bulstrode was not one of them. He was simply a man whose desires had been stronger than his theoretical beliefs and who had gradually explained the gratification of his desires into satisfactory agreement with his beliefs.

[1] Her characterization of Bulstrode in "Middlemarch."

Digitized by Google

Providentially, he argued, the property had come into his hands, and he would make better use of it than the original owners."

We must, therefore, distinguish conscience as the judge in the court which it is, from the impulse to the right the good man has, after conscience decides and recognizes that this good impulse comes from lifelong loyalty to the right, good habits, and character. We shall sadly find in efforts to reform and convert bad men that such impulses are not dominant in them.

The conscience of a professional burglar seems very curious and one-sided until we still further differentiate conscience. On many acts this man has a keen sense of right and wrong. He is socially pure and affectionate as a husband and father with a high sense of responsibility to his home. He is truthful and faithful to every promise. But upon the sin and crime of stealing his neighbor's goods he has no moral feeling. His conscience is seared at that point to insensibility. As Professor Bowne points out, "The selfish will is the great source of dishonest casuistry and tampering with truth and righteousness. One bent on wrongdoing never lacks an excuse."

Another man, very impure and lustful, was the soul of honesty and veracity. The writer had long business dealings with him, without suspecting his impure life, and often spoke of him as an ideal honest man, a man of his word. In other virtues he also

Digitized by Google

excelled, but he later confessed without blushing and without evidence of any conscience on the subject the shocking wickedness of nearly all his life.[1]

In a way common to his class, the burglar argued with the author — then a visitor for five years to the Pennsylvania Eastern Penitentiary. He persuaded his conscience that the world owed him a living, that the rich men he robbed got their goods and money dishonestly, and that he made good use of it. Such robbers seem to have no conscience as to robbery, but on questions of lying and the social vice they are sensitive and responsive to the right.

Some sinful people have no scruples about profane swearing, Sabbath-breaking, or brutal fighting, but are conscientiously honest in business dealings and faithful to every trust committed to them. They would, with an oath, smash the head of a man who would accuse them of stealing or lying, and they will prove that they were all right on those points. But conscience would be dead in the other matter, however. On the other hand a church member whom I know is very punctilious about Sabbath observance and purity, but loose in business dealings and untruthful.

A Wahabi Mohammedan was asked what was the greatest of sins. "Undoubtedly," he said, "the sin of denying the personal unity of the Godhead." "What is the second?" "Undoubtedly the use of

[1] Roads, "Abnormal Christians," pp. 10–15, where other such cases are studied.

Digitized by Google

tobacco." "And how about murder, lying, adultery?" "Ah! God is merciful," he replied.[1]

Some Italian soldiers committed murder and robbery and sat down to feast. One became greatly distressed in conscience. He had eaten meat, forgetting it was Friday.[1] "So the Pope of Rome can, as a matter of conscience, have no wife, but much wine; the head of the Mohammedan Church many wives, but no wine."[1]

The child's conscience is important to study. It exhibits the beginnings of moral culture and its laws of growth. The child under six is a creature of violent impulses chiefly physical reactions. He seems wicked, disobedient, willful, selfish, but these are the impulses of an unformed moral nature. We train him by giving careful and repeated teaching of God's law in his childish life, and by describing the acts and circumstances of things he is doing or purposing to do. Then his conscience responds, and he gradually acquires conscientious life, deciding moral questions more and more clearly. We regard the child just as we do the uninformed judge in the court when a case comes before him. We give him the law fully and we detail the act in all its circumstances and conditions.

The good man with a conscience is not alike keen on all virtues or sins. On his duty to be honest he may be faithful, but on his responsibility to train his children how indifferent! Or he may be keen as

[1] Dr. Kellogg's "Handbook of Comparative Religions," quoted in "Conscience and Its Culture."

Digitized by Google

to home duties and loose in business dealings, keen as to his duty to the poor and indifferent in personal morals. The Pharisees were too conscientious to enter Pilate's judgment hall on the feast day, but they had no hesitation about murder and perjury. They "strained at gnats and swallowed camels," — a wonderful word of Jesus about conscience. An American preacher recently declared that "the sins of believers materially differ from the sins of unbelievers," being regarded by God with more leniency, "because God sees the believer only in Christ." This seems shockingly blasphemous; but see the many dishonest business men in our churches, faithful to church duties. Is not their conscience like this?

From this wide induction of particular consciences, which seem clearly typical, the following facts appear evident:

1. Conscience has to do with particular acts and specific virtues or vices, not with general goodness or evil. It is judge only in the case before it and decides whether in that case the man does right or wrong. Lotze[1] says, "Conscience is moved to single verdicts of approval or disapproval by the contemplation of single fixed cases." It is well known that consciences are often more keen on a mere impropriety which they have studied than on a sin not so keenly looked into. Men feel mortified for having failed to return a courtesy when they cheat without scruple.

[1] Lotze, "Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion," Macmillan's, p. 152.

Digitized by Google

Of any particular sin or vice several times committed it is true that

> Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As to be hated needs but to be seen;
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.[1]

2. Conscience itself is limited to a simple perception of right or sin in an act in the light of law revealed to it and the fullness of the statement or understanding of the case before it. Lotze says, "Conscience resembles our faculty of cognition."

3. The impulse to do the right, when it exists, is due to the habits of the man concerning the good act contemplated or to his general habit in promptly and fully responding to the right. It is not conscience directly which gives the impulse. The length to which the whole moral nature is identified with conscience is shown in Joseph Cook's Boston Monday Lectures on "Conscience." He says: "Conscience is a perception of rightness or wrongness in our motives; a sense of oughtness which postulates God; a fear of future punishment. It is infallible in its field, deciding upon the rightness of motive. Conscience emphasizes the ought." That was really all true of Mr. Cook's splendid moral nature. It is not the definition of the conscience of other Boston men, of vice, political corruption, and crime, nor of many good church people. Daniel Webster's famous phrase, "Murder will out," has made a profoundly wrong

[1] Pope.

Digitized by Google

impression. In spite of hundreds of murders in our large cities undetected and unavenged, hundreds of men whose hands are red with blood walking our streets boldly,[1] and of other crimes utterly concealed, men will quote "Murder will out" and will expect as universal the really rare and long-delayed self-exposure. Webster said: "There is no evil that we cannot face or flee from but the consciousness of duty disregarded. A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent, like the Deity." How fine the work of a pastor if that were true of his flock universally! But it is not if the history of crimes or of disgraceful insensibility to great obligations is to be believed. It is worse than foolish to trust the natural conscience for this impulse or for effects which require the training and enlightening of conscience to secure. The powerful conviction of the Spirit of God works miracles in hardened consciences, but the conscience Webster described was his own; for he could say, "The greatest theme that ever came into my mind is my personal responsibility to Almighty God." How fearfully he must have suffered for his "seventh of March speech" compromising on slavery! But did Preston Brooks ever suffer in conscience for his murderous assault on Sumner?

4. The sinful man differs in attitude of conscience to different sins. He is insensible on his besetting sin, but may be keen as any saint on others. In each

[1] A recent popular magazine estimated hundreds of bold murderers undetected in one city.

Digitized by Google

he acts not on general sin, but on specific sins or virtues in particular circumstances and according to his apprehension of the law of God on that subject. By this he sees the right or the wrong. Then former influences or habits on that act may impel him toward it, but the dominant impulse from later conduct moves away from it.

5. Practically this clear view of conscience has value in indicating where and what to teach and train in the reformation of the bad man and in the development of the good man. We must show to him, and keep before ourselves, that the habits and sinful nature drive to evil even in the clearest sense of duty the other way, and that we must exhibit the duty no less strenuously, but now also point out the hopelessness of salvation without the regenerating change of appetites, habits, and character by God's Holy Spirit.

Conscience is to be viewed, also, in its decisions made respectively before and after an act. Before the act, as conscience considers it in the light of Christian law, it decides, let us say, that it is right, a duty to do. But it decides only for that instance. After the act is actually done conscience may condemn for the imperfect way it was done, or may approve when it is fully carried out. Hence the importance of having all the circumstances and possibilities of the act before conscience at first, or in court parlance (for Kant is right in calling conscience the "inner court," or better, the judge of that

Digitized by Google

inner court), that the case submitted should be fully stated as well as the law applying to it be fully set forth. Then the judge's decision will not require reversal or modification after the act.

Shakspere gives the effect of conscience after acts:

> I feel within me
> A peace above all earthly dignities,
> A still and quiet conscience.[1]

That when approved; now when condemned:

> Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind;
> The thief doth fear each bush an officer.[2]

There is much said about the boldness of innocence and the timidity of guilt, but this is not universal. Solomon says, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth, but the righteous are as bold as a lion." And Shakspere again:

> What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted!
> Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just,
> And he but naked though locked up in steel
> Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.[3]

But on all this Kant has this conclusive word, "In order to imagine the vicious man tormented with a sense of his transgressions, it must first represent him as morally good in the main trend of his character."

Experience, however, shows that after an act conscience is usually for the moment clearer and truer. The fire of passion which impelled to the act and then beclouded conscience is now spent, the act

[1] Henry VIII, Act III. [2] Henry VI, Part III.
[3] Henry VI, Part II, Act III.

Digitized by Google

itself in its consequences stands out more distinctly, and the expected pleasure or profit is disappointing. So the still small voice finds for a moment the better hearing. But in the bad man this is only for a moment, for he immediately drowns conscience with the clamor of false excuses and specious pleas.

Like all human organs, conscience may be trained to accuracy and promptness. And like these other organs it has its perils. The eye has its illusions, the ear its false roaring, and the conscience its color blindness and double images. Going to the motives, conscience will discover several back of an act, mixed motives, and may become confused among them. It is rarely that several strong motives are not present. We see them in judging others. But in self-judging it is still more difficult to determine the dominant motive. No deception is so common in morals as self-deception as to what really moved us to a given action. The moral eye viewing self is too close to its object to see all the outline or proportions of a deed.

How, then, may conscience be trained more accurately and decisively to perceive the right and wrong in us? By exercising it with the purest motives. Christ gives the practical beginning in duty to God, "The first commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, heart, soul, and strength"; love him more than houses or land, wife or children, or life itself; love him with such an intensity as to seem to hate houses or lands, wife

Digitized by Google

and children. That is, exclude from love to God all possible admixture of motives that might be selfish or sinful. This is making "the eye" (which is really here the conscience) "single and the whole body shall be full of light." And this means that the moral "eye" being trained to see God only, it will be sure to acquire absolute purity of motive for all other duties. Contrariwise, if the religion be of mixed motives, — love to God, but also love for selfish ambitions, possessions, or place, — the whole life will be confusion in the darkness mixed motives engender.

Supreme love to God must be insisted upon as the beginning of practical moral culture. It is at this point of love to God that the religious life, distinct[1] as it is from the moral life in essential nature, really unites with moral activity. The religious and the moral below that point are distinct, as we see in the irreligious man who has good moral character, and just as clearly in the religious man who has loose morals. Love to God is both religious and moral, the loftiest activity in worship and the noblest motive in all the virtues. Here conscience starts with confident step. For here the mixed motive is most readily seen.

On the other hand, in many activities in relation to man, self-interests have some rightful place though subordinate, and the problem of motive is to have the dominant one right. Here the peril is that the man himself may mistake the relative strength of his

[1] Roads, "Abnormal Christians," Chaps. VIII–XIV.

Digitized by Google

various motives. Love to God must be the strongest motive in every act in clear consciousness, as it may be, so that "whatever we do, whether we eat or drink, we do all to the glory of God." Otherwise, men plainly selfish to other eyes will maintain that they are very benevolent and self-sacrificing. W. B. Carpenter[1] says on this subject: "Individuals in whose character the love of truth and justice and the benevolent affections are the prominent features, and who would shrink from any violation of those principles for any selfish purpose whatever, are sorely perplexed when they (truth and justice and benevolence) are brought into collision with each other."

Paul[2] thus exercised his conscience to be always void of offense toward God and man. There is great gain in recognizing the peril of mixed motives. What are some of the tests of their relative strength? 1. The joy the soul feels in serving each object, God, others, self. 2. The time instinctively spent in the service of each.

Training of conscience means also ability to detect the motives that are always wrong, like envy, pride, revenge, hate, indifference, and to feel strongly that they are always wrong. The differences between these, always wrong, and their very similar motives which are right is very subtle and easily disguised. For example, envy is the sinful end of a laudable desire to possess the good qualities of another; pride

[1] Carpenter, "Mental Physiology," p. 244.
[2] Acts 24 : 16.

Digitized by Google

the sinful excess of a proper self-regard; revenge a sinful extension of righteous indignation. And so on, through all the virtues and sins. Only through continuous training of the eyes of conscience to distinguish the finest shades of moral colors can the real identity of sins be detected and exposed.

The enlightenment of conscience on the side of law is through the word of God. The law to be applied to every case is found in the Scriptures. Its final word is from the lips of Christ, and its perfect example of obedience is in the life and the spirit of Christ. His was the Christian conscience, and it is a profound moral duty to read and study the Scriptures. Neglect of this study leaves the moral sense in gross darkness for which man is responsible. The primary duty of conscience is to go to this light to know colors and nature just as it is a duty to the eyes to go to adequate light for reading and work.

The Christ who taught gospel ethics is the creator of the human conscience, and the conscience answers to the Bible as the lungs do to the air or the eyes to the light. If there were any laws of Christ's moral code that cultivated conscience at its best could declare unconstitutional in morals, that would be good defense, for not obeying them, at God's final judgment. But there are no such laws of Christ's teaching which the keenest of human consciences can discern to be self-seeking or subversive of love and justice. So the individual conscience owes it to itself to turn on all the light of Christ.

Digitized by Google

To get all this discussion of conscience into one clear view: We see that conscience is the sense of the rightness or wrongness of actions and their motives, in such light of God's moral law as it may have, and with such measure of knowledge of all the circumstances of the act as may be given to it. The value of the decision of conscience depends upon these factors of the law and the facts in the case.

We enter therefore the high court of conscience and study the cases coming before its moral tribunal.

Digitized by Google

V

IN THE COURT OF CONSCIENCE

CONSCIENCE, in still more exact discrimination, is judge in a supreme court of the soul, a court within after the modern ideals of such a court of justice. Let it be remembered that this modern court is the long-developed creation of Christian ethics to determine right and wrong as actually done. Is it not really a concrete extension of conscience into society? It serves certainly as a fine parable of the processes of conscience. Like such a court, conscience has its array of advocates, witnesses, executive, and all before it; conscience the judge as in a supreme court but here deciding upon both the facts and the law.

Its jurisdiction is the whole moral life, but "all life is startlingly moral; there is never a moment's truce between virtue and vice." [1] The law here — for we are dealing now with conscience in Christian lands — is the moral teaching of Christ. The conscience, like the supreme court judge, is the eye upon the moral world, the ear that discerns when harmony is reached, the smell which detects the wholesome and the noisome, the taste which knows the sweet

[1] Thoreau.

Digitized by Google

and the nauseous, and the touch testing the solid or shaky in foundation and structure.

But it is the whole man that uses the conscience in moral vision, just as the whole man looks through his eyes upon the material world. What he sees, in each case, depends upon all he knows and all he is. For example, four men gaze upon a field of ripe golden wheat waving in the glory of the summer sunshine. One sees a beautiful landscape, for he is an artist and revels in the colors, lights, shades, and attractive forms; another sees toil and rich money returns in the field, for he is a farmer; another sees the structural character of the plant, for he is a botanist, and the fourth sees simply the novel waves like a sea of gold and the wonders of God's creation, for he is a reflecting Christian man from the city. The eyes of all are the same probably, but in each case the whole man sees through them; the man sees by the eyes according to what is in him of knowledge and experience. So conscience, the judge, will see and judge by what is in the subject or by what can be revealed to him of all that is before him. Hence the need of thoroughly "trying the case."

But, let us insist, the action of Christian conscience in man's life is a simple matter. It is essentially a judicial decision upon a moral law point involved in the specific human case brought before it. We go into this unique but real court and study it. Its value in a moral decision, or, in other words, its weight and finality in the moral realm, depends on

Digitized by Google

the one hand upon its adequate information about the detailed circumstances of the case, the obligations involved, and the relations sustained — all the complete statement of the case; and on the other hand upon the knowledge conscience is given of the moral law and its true application to the case. In the judge, conscience, it requires subordination of all feelings, if possible, the elimination of all feelings in the decision, just as we demand this of the judge in our courts. Conscience sitting on a question of Christian action should be a judge with cool and absolutely just intellect. It is concerned now only with a pure point of law in a specific case.

For instance, take to conscience the difficult question of the right or wrong of a Sunday pleasure excursion for a poor man's family. There is at once a feeling of sympathy for man, wife, and children, deprived of all but a very few holidays in a year and penned up in a small hot cottage or tenement rooms; there is also a warm appreciation of the physical benefits of the trip and of the strengthening ties of love effected. Should this decide the question? This does decide it, in many minds; but surely it is a question very seriously to be considered whether the Sunday excursion may not after all be taken at too great a cost, present and future. Such Sunday holidays, if generally taken, would certainly undermine the observance of Sabbath law, would employ many working people in running the excursions, would increase the demand for the abolition of all

Digitized by Google

Sunday rest laws, and so fatally weaken the church's power to resist it, and soon the Sunday would be at an end and the poor workingman would not even have the day with his family. Then, as the result of the relaxation of general moral restrictions and the lowering of moral ideals caused by the weakening or abolition of Sunday rest, the workingman would receive no more wages than he now does for six days' work. Is the Sunday excursion wise at such a cost? Let us get the whole case before us.

Christian conscience will remember that the Sabbath law is not only a part of the Decalogue, but it long antedates the Decalogue; it goes back to Creation, when "the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Christ teaches that it is a law based upon human need,—"made for man, and not man for the sabbath,"—so that no human need can be argued for its infraction against the deepest human needs met by its observance. The law itself requires rest from toil for self and family, and also great care that the Sabbath rest of another should not be taken away by us. There must be rest for all or soon there will not be rest for any. The rest from toil has its chief purpose in the worship of God, meeting with him and fellowship with him. The day is to be holy; the two purposes, rest from toil and spiritual activity, being the two hemispheres of the Sabbath purpose. Does man need a day with God? Does he need and receive good from thoughts and activities with eternal realities?

Digitized by Google

What is the actual experience of those who gladly and faithfully comply with this ideal of the Sabbath? Some of them are hard toilers with hands who fill the Sabbath with spiritual activities, and they prove that their bodies are more fully recuperated in that way than by idle lounging or pleasure excursions. Turning to intense spiritual life wonderfully rests the physical weariness, while the hot, crowded excursion leaves all the family so physically exhausted it is hard for them to drag their bodies home late at night. On grounds of physical recuperation the case is all with the Sabbath as a joyful day of worship.

When we consider further that the excursion does vast spiritual harm to the children and to the mother, who have other time for recreation during the week, it is still more perilous to take it. If the father declares he must have it, will he take it at the cost of the Christian character of his children, with the probability that, spiritual safeguards being removed, these children will yield in after years to terrible temptations to vice and crime? If it be claimed that the happiness of the family requires the excursion, we may reflect that deeper sources of lasting happiness may be dried up for the temporary and superficial pleasure of the exciting trip. Only religion in the home, sincere and active, insures permanent happiness and secures such training of character in the children that their future is virtuous, prosperous, and loving, — the happiness of father, mother, and all to the end of life. And further, let it be remembered always that

Digitized by Google

only the Christian religion developed and spread with power promises better conditions for labor in the future. The workingman who helps to break down the Sabbath, to empty the churches of worshipers, and to defy the restraints of godliness digs the grave of all hope for his higher civilization, shorter hours, just compensation for his work, and richer comforts for his family. Workingmen are now seeing this plain truth and by a great national movement are striving for Sunday rest for all. Railroads in great sections are taking off Sunday excursions for the same reason. We must not allow feelings of pity or sympathy or momentary love of excitement to move us, but we must decide by cooler judgment this larger question.

Another illustration of the need of conscience sitting as an unimpassioned, a cool judge upon moral questions may be found in the right or wrong of opposing the formation of labor unions. Some employers oppose such unions after much bitter experience of certain evils wrought by them. Some of the best workmen oppose the union because they do not need unions; they can get work at the highest wages and at any time without union help. These workmen are often hampered by the rules of the union. Many employers and many of the best workmen oppose unions, for they have suffered real wrongs from them and sincerely in many cases feel they are harmful.

But now let them dispassionately study the question in the light of Christian law and the actual condition

Digitized by Google

of all working people. What will they see to be duty? First, the Christian law to the case. In relations of man to man Christian law requires brotherhood and mutual help. In all Christian history, love and brotherhood have ever extended their reach into intellectual, social, physical, and now industrial conditions, and thus have been producing associations, societies, unions, leagues, lodges, brotherhoods, ever becoming closer. The Christian spirit has stimulated these unions of men in all human activities. It need not be maintained that all these associations have done has been good and right. Nothing human is wholly right. It may even appear that some associations have been harmful, chiefly or wholly. It is clear that some labor unions have been harmful, because after associating as brothers in labor they adopted principles unbrotherly to employers and to certain classes of workmen.

What, then, is the Christian remedy? The same as when the church became corrupt or the family impure or government tyrannical. It is not to abolish these social institutions, it is not to give up church fellowship, but to cleanse and reconstruct it in righteousness; it is not to give up the family, but to build new families in love and virtue. It is not the union of laborers itself that is wrong in Christian ethics. On the contrary, such union is the inevitable fruit of the Christian law of love. It is the unbrotherly and inequitable feature of the union that is wrong. These features should be changed or eliminated in

Digitized by Google

all unions, church, home, labor leagues; the unions should not be abolished. This is Christian law.

Now study the case further. The workingman's actual condition and needs require unions. Alone he is helpless against the steady encroachments upon his wages and hours by united industries. He cannot safely ask for any improvement in wages or conditions of work, whatever the desperate needs of his family may prompt. He cannot intervene for the protection of a fellow workman. In most places there is no longer the relation of personal acquaintance or friendship between employer and workman, or even with the foreman. The competition of owners with each other or their union into trusts in the same business renders the workman's wages the easiest place of relief for competition or for larger profits, and the workman must endure or quit if he is not in union with other workmen. The conscience of employers should strenuously oppose all unbrotherly or unjust factors in the union, but strongly favor the union itself in a good form.

Since the validity of personal conscience in all its decisions depends upon the degree of its knowledge of Christian law and upon the fullness of its information of all the things involved in the case before conscience, and since upon both law and facts all men are imperfect in varying degrees and new light may come in the future, how far shall men accept the decisions of their consciences? Only tentatively, of course, and with the mind always open for further

Digitized by Google

light, especially for the "much light which is yet to break from God's word."

But since such decisions of conscience are made to be acted upon in the Christian spirit, the action after the best possible decision must not be hesitating or uncertain. Christian action should always be with force, confidence, and enthusiasm. That very action reveals new light at times, and it is the really Christian attitude to decide in the new light just as forcefully. All great Christian leaders have thus acted without hesitating after careful decisions. This is the well-known maxim of Theodore Roosevelt. It is said that Comte, the philosopher, recognizing the peril of thoughtful men of this hesitation and uncertainty in action, made it a rule of his life to do very vigorously and at once what he had decided to be right.

Conscience at rare times has an apparent collision of different duties to decide. Duties to the home seem to come in conflict with equally imperative duties to the church, to country, and to other homes. There are exigences in national defense when there is no plea of home duties permitted for not enlisting in the army. This seems harsh and cruel, as also seems the word of Christ that a man must leave father and mother, wife and children and home at his call to special service. Yet in the end both are for the best interests of the very home thus deserted and, above all, the conflict of duties becomes the harmony of the best for all.

Digitized by Google

VI

THE WILL, THE MORAL EXECUTIVE

ACTION is initiated by the will. Conscience decides the moral character of an act before and after, but the impulse to do it comes from the will either now in original action, or from previous acts of the will which have become habits, and the habits, taken together, character. Conscience is like the friend pointing the right direction to the inquiring traveler. In the traveler is the desire to go the right way, and the inner movement to go follows. The will is related to conscience as the civil executive, the sheriff, to the judge. But again, as to the will, Muirhead[1] well says: "The will is the man himself. Avoid thinking of the will as possessed by the man. It is the man." John Stuart Mill calls character "a completely fashioned will."

Kant declares, "There is nothing good *without qualification* but a good will." So we know action may be hindered or marred by imperfect result, but man can will to do perfectly right or to love perfectly. And the moral value of such determination toward the ideal is not lessened within if the will holds firm. As Burns says,

[1] "Ethics," pp. 51, 53.

Digitized by Google

What's done we partly may compute
But know not what's resisted.

But what is resisted gives moral culture just as really and effectively.

There is, therefore, supreme moral significance in the will. We would be led far afield by a large psychological study of the will, but while we must take heed that all our investigations and discriminations are with scientific thoroughness and accuracy, and all tested by the assured results of authorities, we inquire now for only the practical aspects of the will of man.

Freedom of the will must be real and adequate to posit full moral responsibility. Aristotle says, "An action is right or wrong only when it proceeds from free will and personal responsibility, and its moral desert must be judged by the intention." Such freedom of will is necessarily only within certain limits, the limitations of moral decision to do or not to do and to do the moral opposite. Without alternative power there can be no blame for wrongdoing, however terrible the consequences of the sin, and no praise for doing right, however glorious the results. Responsibility, even in human law, requires power in the man to do or to refrain from doing and power to do otherwise. The criminal under absolute compulsion by another, were that possible, or under the stress of a disordered mind, which is often the case, is not adjudged guilty.

"If compulsion determines conduct, then judgment does not concern itself so much with a man as with

Digitized by Google

the power that compels him. Approval or disapproval of conduct is thus conditioned by the freedom of choice, in the ability to will freely . . . to do or refuse to do. . . . What lies outside a man's power does not lie within a man's duty."[1]

But when the uncontrollable impulse arises from habit in the man himself, due to previous free decisions to sin, the man is guilty of the evil habit and of every evil act following. All the more clearly is he guilty because it requires very many and long-continued repetitions of an evil act or feeling to reach the stage of an uncontrollable impulse, if indeed that is ever really reached in this life. The man, however, who deliberately makes himself a slave cannot take advantage of that slavery to plead inability to act as a free man; even when the slavery to evil habit is far worse and more complete than he expected when he entered upon the wrong. It is for the man's responsibility "a real freedom of will if it is freedom *but for himself*"[2] or freedom from all barriers but those erected by himself.

The same principle holds on the side of right and the good. While no man is praiseworthy for doing the right which he cannot help doing, should there be such a case, yet if he does it automatically from his own long habits of doing right, he deserves all the greater honor. For then it has become a matter of being good as well as doing good.

[1] Fairbairn, "Philosophy of Religion," pp. 61, 75.
[2] Mackenzie, "Ethics."

Digitized by Google

We observe then that the acts of the will as the moral executive, when repeated in any virtue or vice, rapidly grow into habits which more and more nearly become automatic. Habits are the brain grooves or nerve tracks into which the will falls easily. They are the reward for continuous welldoing which renders what duties were at first hard and heavy, "the easy yoke and the light burden" of Christ. And evil habits are the ever accumulating curse and crushing load for continual sinning. They render succeeding sins almost inevitable and ever approaching compulsion. "The education of the will is really of far greater importance as shaping the destiny of the individual than that of the intellect, and it is only by amassing and consolidating emotional *residua* in given directions that this can be secured." [1] "I am, I ought, I can, I will — the firm foundation stones on which we base our attempt to climb into a higher sphere of existence." [2]

We may cultivate the will in promptness and force toward right acts when conscience has decided. The duty of doing at once is upon us. Hesitation is weakening to the moral nature. It fails to follow up the victory which is in the decision and gives the enemy, the tempter, another opportunity. Many good people fall into this fatal error of thinking that to hold the decision still open is good conscientiousness. They lose the habit which becomes strongest by powerful initiative, for the good habit will

[1] J. D. Morell.

[2] W. B. Carpenter, "Mental Physiology," p. 376.

Digitized by Google

retain through life the characteristics of its birth and early formation. Begun with immediate force, clean cut, and unhesitating, it will be vigorous and delightful. Every good course ought to be leaped into with immediate enthusiasm.

Look more closely at the nature of habits. All life runs swiftly to habits. The second act of any kind is perceptibly easier than the first. A mental and moral groove for it cuts deeper and deeper, so that an act at first difficult, let us say, and requiring strenuous effort, soon becomes almost automatic and inevitable. Then the will required for it diminishes and it is a habit; if good, the blessed reward for repeated right-doing; if evil, the curse already for sin. As the Japanese say of drink, so it is of all actions, words, or feelings, good and evil:

> First the man takes a drink,
> Then the drink takes a drink,
> Then the drink takes the man.

The word "habit," from the Latin *habeo*, to have, is full of meaning; but whatever it means etymologically, in human nature it means not that the man has the habit, but that the habit possesses the man. As has been declared:

> We sow a thought and reap an action,
> We sow actions and reap a habit,
> We sow our habits, reap a character,
> And character is destiny.

Moral acts of veracity, honesty, purity, forgiveness of injuries, kindness, punctuality, fidelity, sympathy,

Digitized by Google

and self-sacrifice become habits at these points. All these and other good habits form that second nature, the developed nature, which constitutes the mature manhood of the Christian life. But always the habits are of specific virtues, of which one may be strong and another weak in the same man. A good man may have a fixed and powerful habit of truth-telling and be weak on personal purity, or he may have a strong habit of purity and be loose on honesty. There is, to be sure, a reflex influence of one good habit upon another, but this influence is not determining in effect. So that there are in society and in our churches many abnormal characters, lopsided and perilously defenseless at one point or more, while strongly fortified at others. We speak of the weak point as "the besetting sin," the place where, as might be expected, temptations assail the man. And the man is ruined and the soul, it may be, lost when entered at that one defenseless point, however powerful the rest of the character may be. Is not this the awful meaning of "he that offends at one point is guilty of all," or, as the American Revision translates it, "he that stumbles at one point," will surely fall? The general good character of a man, accused of just one crime, is pleaded in extenuation of it, but is never a defense to acquit of it.

Virtues and vices, therefore, are simply habits. They are the crystallized acts of the will in successive deposit. Virtues and vices are born in the will and a man is just what his will is or has become.

Digitized by Google

The very perplexity of moral conditions may cause a conscientious man to hesitate at first, then hesitate repeatedly, and soon form the enervating, fatally weak habit of indecision. The line is very subtle. But after thoughtful study and decision in the best light, even if not fully clear in every particular about the act, if action is important, the will ought to be positive and powerful. Do with the might of a strong will whatever conscience decides ought to be done. The one exception to this is in matters of personal pleasure or profit simply, where action is not immediately necessary and the only loss will be a self-denial. When these are doubtful the Christian principle is to decide not to do them.

The two mighty pillars of character, the two fundamental moral habits, are keen conscientiousness and a powerful will. Both may become true habits by repeated and undeviating exercise in all the life. To examine afresh every action by our own conscience in the latest light and courageously to act, whatever the precedents or the doings of others, even of the best Christians — that is one pillar. After the decision, to throw the whole soul immediately into the right course — that is the other pillar. Upon these two pillars rests the glorious temple of Christian character, the temple the Holy Spirit of God will fill, and no Samson of evil is strong enough to move those pillars. For they are not of stone, made in blocks one upon another, but living trees with roots deep down among the rocks and with trunks of unwork-

Digitized by Google

able wood. These two are closely interdependent. A powerful will makes a still clearer conscience, and the conscience reënforces the will.

This combination or team of a strong will instantly responsive to clear conscience is what made Saul of Tarsus surrender immediately to Christ when the Lord appeared to him at Damascus, turn right about face, and in one sweeping decision change his whole career. It was the perfect proof of his claim to have always exercised himself to have a conscience void of offense to God or man. This strong will moved by conscience is the farthest from stubbornness of former opinion, — the mulishness excusable in a mule, for by some freak of nature he was made that way. But in a man the pride of mere consistency is, in Henry Ward Beecher's words, "the habit of small minds." Saul of Tarsus at Damascus is a magnificent illustration of a really powerful and finely cultivated godly will.

Habits, or crystallized will, are also inner virtues. Such are habits — habits of sympathy felt, of humility, of good desires, of aspirations, motives, of faith in man, of hopefulness, of love, of conscientiousness, and powerful will, as we have just seen.

The strength of habits depends upon powerful initiative, uninterrupted repetition of the good act, and repeated reënforcement by latest conscience. Uninterrupted repetition is of prime importance. A single break in the early stages of forming a good habit is serious. It leaves a gap in the groove

Digitized by Google

requiring caution ever after or extraordinary cultivation to cover.

Be strong!
We are not here to play — to dream, to drift,
We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.
Shun not the struggle — face it!
It is God's gift.[1]

[1] Maltbie D. Babcock.

Digitized by Google

VII

THE RELIGIOUS NATURE TO THE AID OF THE MORAL NATURE

HOW shall we in daily living bring the resources and power of the spiritual nature to the aid of the moral nature? The spiritual nature may be in the closest relation to the moral nature; there is a point in Christly love to man where the moral and the religious coalesce. But there are good men morally who are not religious, and in some cases really anti-religious, whose goodness, as far as it goes, by any fair test, is as sincere as the Christian man's goodness. They have not what Matthew Arnold's minimum definition of religion calls "morality touched with emotion," or, what he means by this sober word "emotion," fire or enthusiasm, but they have honesty, veracity, fidelity, and sympathy with other virtues. They have these virtues and love to exercise them.

Moral men get these virtues in Christian lands from Christ's teachings, which have permeated all thinking. They are the fruits of the kingdom outside of the walls which we also claim for Christ. The moral man, whatever his own conscious attitude

Digitized by Google

to Christ or his salvation, is saved from barbarism by Christ's influence. Strange that all of them do not see it.

The condition of being moral and not religious shows that there is a clear distinction between these two natures in man. This moral man who is not a Christian is the problem of Christian workers, and none of them fail to see the two distinct natures in him. There is also a Christian man who is deeply religious, but not so highly cultivated in moral qualities, not so keen in moral discriminations, not so manifestly conscientious; he is loose in moral conduct and habits. He shows that a kind of spiritual growth is possible without carrying with it the highly moral. This man may become a pretentious hypocrite, but not necessarily so, nor in all cases. He is an uncultivated moral nature while giving large attention to the spiritual, a problem more pressing and more distressing in our churches than the other.[1]

What, then, shall we do?

1. Recognize that the moral and the religious are distinct, that they may fall apart, but that they ought to be inseparably joined in the Christian life. The religion of Christ is the only one which thus joins them. John Stuart Mill says: "Morals in Greece derived little benefit from religion and became independent of religion." And James Sully said, "Earlier forms of religious sentiment are detached

[1] See Roads's "Abnormal Christians," where the author philosophically discusses this problem.

Digitized by Google

from morality." So also Benjamin Kidd and others. Bushnell[1] says: "In strict propriety the moral is quite another and vastly inferior thing. The spiritual is even as much higher than the moral as the moral is higher than the animal. To have a spiritual nature is to be practically related to the person of God himself." He holds, also, the vital doctrine that a religious nature is a part of inherent human nature which "a bad man has as truly as a good man; a most confirmed atheist has it." Professor Bowne[2] says: "In actual life ethics and religion strongly influence each other, and man is the subject and source of both." But these two natures are distinct and may be separated in fact in any man.

Heathen religions in their very worship are grossly immoral, replete with drunken orgies, cruel and murderous rites, lies and frauds by the priests and oracles. Even ancient Judaism, as the prophets exhibit it, was continually letting temple sacrifices fall away from moral obedience. The Pharisees of Christ's time were pious, but robbers of widows and orphans. Many of them were unclean socially, as they admitted by slinking away when Christ bade the man without sin among them cast the first stone at the fallen woman. Romish corruptions are due to the same divorce of religion and morals, and protestant churches are far from being free from the same kind of religion without moral standards

[1] Bushnell, Sermon on "The Spirit of Man."
[2] Bowne, "Principles of Ethics," p. 188.

Digitized by Google

when many of the unscrupulous leaders of dishonest business and corrupt politics are high in their membership. With pious eyes turned upward they keep their hands deep in their neighbors' pockets.

The peril of religious immorality is that the religion makes the immorality worse. The religious profession becomes a salve to the soul when pricked by the conscience for its wrongs to men. Subtly the man deceives himself into thinking that in some way a Sunday piety atones for the week's wrongdoing, that his religion places him above the ordinary sinner in God's favor, and that his sins are not so heinous because he claims to belong to Christ's church. In truth they are far more so, for that reason, in God's sight, and it was upon such people, the immoral, thieving, greedy Pharisees, that Jesus poured out his most terrific judgments. But, as Professor Bowne declares, "the ecclesiastical conscience has varied all the way from the puerile to the diabolical," and these Pharisees, instead of becoming penitent under Christ's rebuke, showed again their real character by murdering him. While doing that dreadful deed they were also punctiliously refusing to enter Pilate's secular judgment hall lest they should be defiled and not then be able piously to participate in the passover feast! The Jesuit casuistry shows the lengths to which an immoral religiousness will proceed: cunningly justified murder, ruthless robbery, all abominable hypocrisies, lies, and corruptions. What we now insist upon is that all this goes on by psycho-

Digitized by Google

logic processes the same in all natures. Divorce righteousness from religion and there is left a religion which itself becomes a fatal handicap to a return to righteousness.

2. The faith of the Christian must, therefore, be a "faith that worketh by love," a faith that works out into brotherliness, sympathy, equitable business dealings, justice, righteousness in all things. How can faith do this moral quickening and strengthening? It is faith in the God of righteousness if it is true Christian faith, in God who hates oppression, greed, and all crimes of man against man; a faith which discerns righteousness in God as clearly as it sees his love, and dwells upon righteousness as joyfully and continually as upon his love. This faith expresses itself in prayer to God for the overthrow of all wrongs upon humanity and for the spread of justice and brotherliness. It longs for the righteousness of God, it prays with great emphasis that God's will may be done upon earth as it is done in heaven. There is surely tremendous strengthening to the moral nature in such faith in God. The whole religious impulse gets back of the conscience, enlightening it, and back of the will, giving it power. John Caird[1] says: "Religion consists not so much in doing spiritual or sacred acts as in doing secular acts from a sacred or a religious motive. A life spent amidst holy things may be intensely secular; a life, the most of which is passed amidst the thick and throng of the world, may

[1] Caird, Sermon, "Religion in Common Life."

Digitized by Google

be holy and divine. A Christlike spirit will Christianize everything it touches."

Faith in God also as overruling Providence, the real King of this world, greatly reënforces moral character. It assures of the ultimate triumph of the right and it warns just as powerfully that all evil schemes and doings will come to naught in this world and to fearful judgment in the next. Such faith never loses courage in a long and desperate moral battle. It gets the inspiration of the divine voice in leadership, assurance of divine help and guidance in all phases of the struggle. This is the new life which Christ gives to morals.

Faith in God brings regeneration of the sinner, a transformation which goes far beyond the spiritual into all the life. The moral nature is broken up and started anew. Old habits of evil are shattered, old lusts and inclinations destroyed in the new love of man, and conscience is made remarkably tender and responsive to duty. There are not, in the nature of the case, new habits given for the old, though the old are broken up, nor can a matured character of goodness be given for the old character of sinfulness. These new habits must be grown just as the old habits of sin grew. Regeneration gives the advantage morally of a free new start, the old bondage gone, and the desires and impulses now toward righteousness. There are degrees of deliverance, in fact, from the old habits according to the faith of the penitent. In some cases it is complete, as with drunkards who

Digitized by Google

have changed absolutely and finally the old appetite for drink to disgust for it, and in the case of blasphemers who have come to reverence God. In other cases it is a real victory over the evil habit, but there is a remnant of inclination to it which must be fully guarded against.

These changes in moral character produced by regeneration, Professor James[1] insists, are scientifically cognizable, and he gives us a definition of the phenomena of regeneration, saying nothing, of course, as science could not, of the cause, "the religious realities" which are taken hold of by the man. Here is his scientific definition: "To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self, hitherto divided and consciously wrong, inferior, and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior, and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities." Harold Begbie,[2] a disciple of William James, gives ten remarkable instances in "a clinic in regeneration," maintaining this scientific method in the investigation of the moral changes produced by conversion. They prove the tremendous power of the spiritual life when united to the moral.

3. Christian love as produced by regeneration is the very heart of both the spiritual and the moral

[1] Prof. William James, "Varieties of Religious Experience."
[2] Begbie, "Twice-Born Men."

Digitized by Google

character of man. We consider it only as related to the moral love, where it "worketh no ill to his neighbour," where it "is the fulfilling of the law." The reënforced brotherly love, the deepest Christlike love will guard the rights of the neighbor fully, and with such love all lying, stealing, and other iniquities will not be committed again. It keeps perfectly the commandments of the Decalogue, or the eight prohibitions of God and the two commandments, as they really are, or first were; for very early the negative form was enlarged to positive love and so they are felt to be commandments to do. The second table of five commandments, or duties to fellow man, are kept by love.

It keeps them perfectly. It does not spin fine points to evade them. It seeks no loophole in any law flowing from these commandments.

The love of the regenerated soul does more than avoid harm. It keeps the Sermon on the Mount as well as the Decalogue and the new commandment of Christlike love with limitless self-sacrifice. William Secker says, "God has three kinds of servants in the world; some are slaves and serve from fear; others are hirelings and serve for wages; others are sons and serve him from love."

4. The other spiritual power of the abiding trio is hope, Christian hope, hope in God. This is more than any optimism, as Christian love is more than altruism; for it is not only looking on the bright side, but it is looking on the upper side of things, which

Digitized by Google

is God. It may start with the noble pessimism of Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, which they define as, "A man's attitude to things who thinks with noble ideals," but not, as in their case, without counting in God. The Christian life has no optimism which blinds its eyes to real evils nor a pessimism which is deaf to the encouraging voice from above, but it is hope in God. This hope is after all a faith in God covering the future, as what is called distinctively faith is an appropriation of the blessings God offers in the present. Hope, faith in the future as safe in God, is the life of moral endeavor in a desperate cause long struggling for triumph. It makes possible the willing sacrifice now of all things for the right in assurance of final triumph. It can plan a long campaign and never be discouraged by successive early defeats.

But the regenerated life means more than the indwelling faith, hope, love. It means the indwelling Spirit of God. He is the enduement of power to man, and this becomes the enthusiasm for righteousness, the enthusiasm for men.[1] He touches moral life with fire, an impulse to live for others in the noblest and largest way. Here is where Evolution has reached Henry Drummond's[2] beautiful "struggle of the fittest to survive changed to the struggle for the Life of Others." In Professor Bowne's noble words, "Christianity has enlarged the ethical field,

[1] Henry George, "I am for men."
[2] Drummond, "The Ascent of Man."

Digitized by Google

has transformed devotion to an abstract system into loyalty to a Person, and given inspiration to moral action."

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.[1]

[1] F. W. Bourdillon.

Digitized by Google

VIII

SUCCESSIVE MORAL FACTORS IN ACTUAL CASES BEFORE CONSCIENCE

THE steps in the process of conscientiously deciding what to do in the increasing perplexities of righteous living ought now to be more fully discriminated. By bringing every step of the process into full light we may learn how to detect errors and discern current perversions to wrong. And we will make these steps more sure in the future.

I. "The case stated," as would be said in court, should come first. For example, "What is the right way to treat an insistent beggar for food or money?" "What books shall the conscientious man read?" "What about reducing wages of your employees?" "What is our duty toward some modern views of the Bible and of Christ?"

There is much more required to state each of these cases for a proper decision than the bare sentence. The complete circumstances of each moral problem, its ethical relations in all directions, and its place in character development and the progress of Christian civilization must be known. Socrates emphasized the fact that knowledge is essential to virtue, and by

Digitized by Google

his searching questions laid bare everything connected with any moral act. Dorner says, "Conscience is a knowledge of moral good and combines cognitive, legislative and judicial power." Very much depends, for a conscientious decision which shall be safe and final, upon the clear way in which we come to know the acts of life with all their factors and all inherent circumstances in the court of conscience.

Take now the matter of giving an insistent beggar food or money. What is a complete view of that case as related to moral obligation? We remember that begging has become a profession because of giving to men and women carelessly and without investigation; that large numbers of people not at all in need choose that way of acquiring goods and property—beggars in New York City frequently received forty dollars in a day. A thorough investigation by a man who for weeks lived their life, roomed at night with them, and followed every case he could by day, showed him that not even one of all the street beggars was worthy of help. Is this beggar a professional or, if not, is my giving to him likely to start him that way? Has he not already the "pauper" air and spirit, that most despicable degradation of manhood? Has his sense of honesty become so blunted by begging that taking goods without the owner's consent will be an easy slide downward?

Do I say I will give him food, but not money? But if he is a professional he will save what money he has because he gets the food. So some beggars who

Digitized by Google

own several houses live on food they beg. But I fear he may suffer hunger very seriously. Foolish fear! though if he did suffer, it would be the best possible experience for him. The writer told a man who whined that he was very hungry and had no place to lodge, "I am glad of it! I wish you would suffer a week more without a crumb to eat. It would take a good while for hunger to reform you into an honest workingman. It is rather cold to-night, but you can keep warm by walking around the streets all night. That's fine exercise for lazy bones!" It would have been interesting for an artist to catch the expression his face gradually took on as I proceeded. It was a mental quickening, but unfortunately there was not the slightest danger that such a shameless, completely pauperized scoundrel would suffer hunger. He could even make selection of what he wanted and throw much away of the generous donations he could whine out of thoughtlessly kind people.

Where there is doubt in any case, of course, a full investigation is our duty, or the case must be turned over to someone for the purpose. The societies of charity have the perils Herbert Spencer[1] points out of perfunctoriness and multiplication of salaried officials, but this is an excrescence of evil which can be cut off; the association of good people in charity work very thoroughly systematized is the only way to prevent real suffering while crushing vagrancy in a

[1] Spencer, "Principles of Ethics," chapter on "Helping the Indigent."

Digitized by Google

large city. Those really needy must be sought out or must know of a place where they can receive immediate attention and help. And, strongly as we ought to reprobate the tramp, we must even more earnestly seek everyone who is worthy in need.

It may be that this man is ill or out of work through no fault of his own, and that he is industrious and a good man. Shall I give to him in that case? Would it not be better to lend him money to be repaid when he can? It is sure to do him harm to give it outright. He will lose just that measure of self-respect which marks the difference between a manly, splendid workingman and an incipient pauper who will be always tempted when in trouble to revert to begging for a living. It is plain we should never give money if we can furnish work, even the lowest drudgery, to a man begging, or can help him to secure work elsewhere.

Much more is involved in such a case, but a weak and maudlin sentiment should not lead us to do a permanent moral harm to a man while giving him temporary material relief. Many cases should be refused outright, as when a man or woman comes from a distant part of the city to beg at your door, or wants money to pay fare to a distant city, or has a baby or wife just deceased and wants money to pay for the funeral, and other manifest frauds. Refuse, but offer to turn over to the charity organization for investigation and see how quickly the person leaves or tells you the "charity" is no good.

Digitized by Google

As illustrations of the necessity of a large study of all that is in a case before the court of conscience, take such questions as the following in present-day Christian life. Who can decide any of these off hand? And who does not see that moral culture of the most helpful kind comes from a discriminating study of these cases? Here indeed is the field for the development of noblest moral character. Let us exercise ourselves upon these questions.

1. What kind of books should the Christian read, what avoid, what make the staple of his reading?

He has limited time for reading.

The world of books is almost numberless, of good, medium, and poor on every subject, and of the good, very many beyond what he can read.

There are books for various mental purposes, information, strenuous mental culture, recreation, amusement, spiritual and moral help. The question is not, what and how much of each kind does he need, but how much can he reach?

The Bible should have much time both in direct reading and in explanatory and illustrative literature. Here are libraries upon libraries, from which he must take the cream. What is it? What critical books upon the Bible should he read and how much of such reading in proportion to all biblical study?

Men differ in mental needs. What are my particular needs at this time?

Men's daily occupations supply some intellectual

Digitized by Google

development. What does mine supply and what needs supplementing by my reading? The Christian should read for others, for his family, for conversation with his friends, for his Christian work, whatever it is.

How can I find my really great book, that will make me as great books have made other men?

What a large case to be decided is a man's reading, and how complex the factors of life affected by it.

2. What about reducing the wages of employees at this time?

It seems an absolute necessity in the conditions of the business, but is it really so?

Can economies in management avert it?

My working people cannot live on less, at present rates of food and supplies.

Can I share the reduction in lower profits?

It may be the alternative seems either reducing wages or closing out the business.

There are few conscientious questions more painfully distressing to a good employer than this problem. He must see that general conditions are wrong in many respects, and as a broad-spirited citizen exert himself to remedy the world-wide situation into which dishonest competition on the one hand and oppressive combinations on the other have brought both business and labor. What we urge here is that a complete survey of the case is vital to conscience.

3. Other questions for exercise, some of which

Digitized by Google

will be discussed in later chapters more properly, may be named:

Is fasting a duty at the present day?

Is dealing in purely speculative stocks conducive to best moral character?

What about games of chance in their personal effects?

How far may parents oppose what seems to them an objectionable marriage of son or daughter?

What is the responsibility of a stockholder in a corporation beyond voting against a wrong action.

II. The next step in the process toward conscientious decision is a clear definition of the moral law applying to the case thus fully stated. Plato founds morality upon relations of law and its end. "Conscience implies a supreme law, constituting an ultimate rule of right."[1]

Here is required a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible in its development of Christian ethics. The Sermon on the Mount is based upon Christ's express declaration that the moral laws of the Bible are a progressive development. Isolated texts from earlier portions are taken to justify Mormon polygamy by Abraham's example, and the Mosaic laws of retribution and execution of heretics to justify murder of Mormon renegades and troublesome Gentiles. So men have taken certain expressions of preference for celibacy by Paul as a law for non-marriage of ministers of the church. Paul's word

[1] American Cyclopedia, article "Moral Philosophy."

Digitized by Google

was, of course, as much for lay disciples, but was expressly stated to be simply his judgment of the better way for him under his peculiar circumstances. The judgment of Jesus, though he himself never married for obvious reasons, was clearly given at the marriage in Cana, in his express declarations in discourses, his use of marriage feasts in parable-teaching and elsewhere. And on all moral questions Jesus claims to give the final word, claims to be the authority to which even all other Scriptures must submit. Jesus teaches the final interpretation of Mosaic fundamental law and points out the imperfections in many Mosaic laws and regulations, which he extends and perfects. Where there seems a conflict between Paul and Jesus, by the same principle the supreme authority is Jesus, until we find the reconciliation of Paul to him, which doubtless there is in a fuller study.

No example, not even of the Apostles after Pentecost, nor of Paul, Peter, or John, is final authority. Paul bade men follow him as he followed Jesus, so that only the example of Jesus constitutes a safe basis for inferences of the true Christian spirit and the law in particular cases. Jesus is the only authoritative precedent in all things in the court of Christian conscience. Whether Peter did right in visiting death upon Ananias and Sapphira or Paul in striking Elymas blind may be an open question in the light of those times and circumstances. It is discussed later in this volume. But here we ask,

Digitized by Google

would Jesus in Peter's place have done so? We know he never did visit punishment upon a man in his earthly ministry, and rebuked James and John for asking him to send fire upon the inhospitable Samaritans as Elijah had done to those who opposed God. His word is full of meaning,[1] "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

The ethics of Jesus as he developed moral principles, obligations, and rights, in germ or more fully, are the standard. Practically, of course, there are very few instances where the Apostles' lives and words do not fully accord with Christ's standard, and in most laws the Apostles give a spirit-guided and helpful development of the germs of moral law uttered by Christ. The history of what Peter and Paul did is the story of imperfect men, so acknowledged by themselves, and must be critically held up to the spirit and example of Jesus for our safe guidance.

Our next step is to find the law of Christ for the case in hand. If it is concerning the poor, what is Christ's law? or if it is concerning the Sabbath, what is the law? We again have fine moral culture in our study. Christ does not make any moral decision easy. Or is the law sought for that applying to reading? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy . . . mind" is the richly fruitful germ law he

[1] Luke 9 : 51–56.

Digitized by Google

gives. The book I hold in my hand is a society novel, full of lustful escapades, divorces, vices, set up attractively. It may be worth while for me as a Christian to read one such book true to that wickedly wasteful kind of living, though even that is a question when it is always better on sin to be ignorant as children. But to make such reading my staple of entertainment or diversion, not to say to give most of precious reading time to it, is to give oneself to that very life in our souls. In Christ's thought it is as sinful, that is, harmful, to the person doing it as the vile life itself. It cannot promote my love to God nor the development of all my mind for that which love to God includes.

Is the book I hold an attack on the Bible? Is it "a modern discussion" of the divinity of the Book? It may be the duty of the man who has time fully to go into the details of that discussion, or of the minister as a public teacher, to read it. But for the Christian man of limited time in reading, to open such profound questions of Biblical criticism, to read books on unbelief without having time to read the other side, or to go fully into the discussion, is mental folly, moral unfairness, and spiritual injury, especially to the Christian man who has spiritual experience of Christ as the true Saviour and his word as full of power. It is not that men fear to open questions about the Scriptures, but that in fairness they will not hear one side when they have not time to hear both, and will not entertain ques-

Digitized by Google

tions of doubt about that which they have abundantly proven true. When a man's house has stood all his life, it is hardly a good use of time to dig up the foundations to see whether it is safe; especially after he has dug more than once before and satisfied himself. The practice of some men, who claim to be Christians, of running after every book that attacks the Bible, going over the grounds of unbelief again and again, and never reading complete discussions is a curious form of mental and moral obtuseness.

This is the more foolish in the face of the libraries of books in exposition and illustration of the Bible and libraries of exceedingly fascinating and valuable Biblical helps. What of these shall the good man read in the time for strictly religious reading? The Bible itself, carefully read, is of ever-growing interest; and books leading to the Bible, not away from it, not too many books *about* the Bible.

The duty to read books to-day, and not simply newspapers, as some do,—two, and even three daily newspapers each day—is imperative. Books are the best creations in the reading world. A book may become a lifelong power in a man, may remake the man into noble proportions. Learn to read fast, but with intense concentration, so as to read much. It is possible to quadruple one's speed in reading with even greater concentration and real results. But the law of all is, taking the clearest sense, that it promotes love to God with all the mind at its best for the reading.

Digitized by Google

III. The next step is that of conscience deciding. The case is fully stated, the Christian law is defined, conscience applies it and decides what is the right thing to do. It is a purely judicial decision on the law and the case. Then conscience brings into the light the inner motives of the heart and decides whether in so doing the man is good.

IV. Next, comes in the good man, the impulse to do the right; in the bad man, the rising tide against the right. This impulse proceeds from the moral nature, good or evil, back of the will. It seeks expression by the will as the executive of the soul. Motives, either selfish, sordid, and sinful, or love to God and man, press for action at once. The will is king among these motives, and when it decrees, there follows the outward act or word.

V. Then follows "conscience after the act." It will pass upon what is done or said, and may fully approve the good. But its decision bears upon two things — how the act was done, and what were the motives actually in the soul. Here conscience may approve the motives, of which there often are several, as praiseworthy, and may condemn the act or certain features of it as not fully good; or conscience may approve the act as good and well done and condemn some of the motives or the dominant motive as wrong; or it may condemn both act and motive as failing to meet high ethical standards.

After the bad act of an evil man, conscience will

Digitized by Google

review it, and here we discriminate carefully several different situations. If the act was that of passion, revenge, jealousy, lust, greed for money or power, or other fiery feeling, and was done hastily, conscience had little opportunity before the deed of judging it. So that in the case of first acts of this character, or among the first before the evil habit is formed, the verdict of conscience after the act is the more valuable. Then the passion, which drowned the voice of conscience before the act, has spent itself, the act itself is seen more clearly in dark sinfulness, and the gratification and result are disappointing. Conscience may then be given a hearing and the man saved from committing the sin again. And if he is tempted he will do well to remember the conscience after the act.

In acts done from fixed evil habits the conscience has become seared and corrupted, often to approve of the evil for specious reasons. Then its voice, even after the act, is not just and true. Only the power of the Spirit of God, convincing of sin, righteousness, and judgment, can accomplish the awakening of such a soul where even conscience is on the side of evil.

VI. The full approval of conscience after an act, which decides "well done" for both the motives and the deed, is the sweetest joy of the moral life. It loses nothing by repetition constantly and many times a day in the good man who always does his whole duty. Habits of virtue bear this fruit of

Digitized by Google

deepest joy most richly until the whole character made good furnishes "meat to eat that" the world "knows not of," and becomes the fore-echo of the "Well done, good and faithful servant" of heaven itself.

Digitized by Google

IX

SOME DECISIVE MORAL TESTS OF JUDGMENTS OF CONSCIENCE

EVERY moral act involves all the man and every field of life. We may therefore test any particular act by its evident influence upon these fields of moral activity. For the purpose of testing an action, let us glance at them in broad survey only and in simple outline. In later chapters there will be opportunity to study these moral fields more fully.

I. What effect will this particular act have on the best development of self? I have decided, let us say, to do certain things on the Sabbath day; I have selected certain books to read, assumed a certain attitude to labor unions; I am treating my family thus and so, and I am adopting new regulations in business. Let me consider keenly and thoroughly the probable effect of any of these acts upon my own moral and spiritual character. My actions are sure to have a serious and powerful reaction upon myself. A wrong done to my neighbor is a greater wrong I do to my real self. A selfish act may very materially harm my neighbor and may hurt his

Digitized by Google

feelings, but may not injure him morally, while to myself it does deepest moral injury; it makes me more selfish. Yielding to an evil desire debauches the soul, weakens its defenses of the good.

I will inquire then as fully as possible:

1. Will this act make me more brotherly and tender in sympathy for mankind, or less so?

2. Will it increase my power to do right in other matters or weaken it?

3. Does it affect my power of conscience favorably or harden and confuse conscience?

These and other such tests are severe, but they must be applied to what we are deciding to do in any particular case.

II. What effect has this act upon my home, the members of my family, and home life? My home is the training center for my children's characters. How will certain business plans when known affect them and their power to resist temptations to dishonesty in the fiery struggle before them? What training value has it for them or what harm?

Home is the larger life for all the family. How will my act affect this larger life of doing good to all men, the life of benevolence to all, the higher aspirations of my children, the work for Christ? Home is the place for rest and recuperation from life's outer work. What I am about to do will either make this life sweeter or put thorns into it for me. Which?

Home is the shrine of most sacred friendships,

Digitized by Google

friendship of husband and wife based upon genuine respect for each other as well as warmest affection. When my wife or husband knows of this act will respect for me be deepened or diminished?

III. The test of effect upon society, civilized Christian society, which is based upon mutual friendships and mutual high esteem. (The reference here is not to society as popularly understood. True Christian society is the enlarged godly home, where friendships are formed closer than kin of blood.) Test the proposed action or course of life, whatever it is, by its probable effect upon good society or its encouragement to evil society and its follies.

IV. Business tests must be applied to acts of conscience falling into the business realm. Good business is good service to mankind. It regards itself as duty bound to give helpful service, to do ethical justice, and to go on steadily improving its product to perfection. What effect will my act have upon business, upon Christian business? Will it encourage or hinder it, or will it stimulate wickedness?

V. The state is affected by almost every act of our lives, immediately or remotely. Does this act of mine tend to a larger and truer democracy of equal privileges and rights, or away from it? Does it promote better citizenship by making it easier to do right and harder to do wrong? Does it protect from current perils and evils or open doors to these?

VI. The church is always helped or hindered by every moral act of man. So I inquire with deepest

Digitized by Google

concern as to the probable effect of my act upon the church of Christ. I am a part of the body of Christ. How will what I am doing influence the rest of his members when it becomes known? Will it promote the development of love, hope, and faith in the organic church, or will it diminish these abiding forces?

These tests are to be made before acting because they are a part of the act in present conditions of life. The effect of my act on all these fields of life is unavoidable. I must have it in view before conscience in the soul. If fairly met these tests will confirm the righteousness of what we have decided upon.

A final test is the consensus of spiritual and ethical Christendom upon the act. There is a place for this consensus or general conviction and practice of Christian people in our study and decisions. What other good people have considered right is entitled to the profound respect of a thoughtful person. We must presume that God's spirit is also given to them and is guiding them so far as they are able to understand him or will yield to him. Spurgeon's wise remark is always to be remembered here: "I cannot understand the attitude of a Christian man who himself claims to be led by the Spirit of God, but pays no heed to the Spirit's leading of other good Christians."

Let us thoroughly consider this consensus of Christian conviction upon any proposed course of action. As a good rule when in doubt about the biblical righteousness of a different decision, we do

Digitized by Google

well to follow other sincere and earnest Christians; but this should never be done as against clear new light given to our own soul which is an advance upon the past. The courageous pioneer is always needed in the realm of righteous living. He must have a fearless break with the past. And he must offend even the best people for a time, as Jesus did the very religious classes of his day. "There is much light yet to break forth from the sacred Scriptures" upon the perplexing problems of daily activities. Every man must keep soul windows open to this new light and obey it even to martyrdom.

For, after all tests, the individual conscience is the supreme court on earth for each man. He may be wrong in his decisions, probably often is on the more perplexing questions of life, but his conscience, enlightened by his study of the Scriptures and his understanding of the Spirit's guidance, is to be followed unflinchingly and invariably through life. Such a man was Wendell Phillips, of whom it is said, "The charms of home, the enjoyment of wealth and learning, the kindly recognition of his fellow citizens, were by him accounted naught compared with duty." [1] Phillips was a heroic pioneer in many of the great ethical movements of the century, following his conscience with the devotion of the early Christian martyr and with the same faith in the ultimate triumph of every righteous cause.

[1] Inscription on his home. *Success*, February, 1911.

Digitized by Google

X

THE CONSERVATION OF SELF

THE duties comprised in rightful self-sustenance and self-development will be analyzed in three groups, but it is very clear that all moral laws for the self-life must have most careful discrimination and application; for here the lines between the good and evil are peculiarly indistinct and subtle. Evil so often is the good run to extremes or the good unguarded.

For instance, how dim are the lines:

Between self-love which is essential to best living, and that selfishness which is evil.

Between self-confidence or the self-respect which is fundamental to personal power for good, and self-conceit.

Between proper sustenance of self, and self-indulgence.

Between pleasure in eating which is valuable to the assimilation of food, and gluttony.

Between desire for personal attractiveness or beauty, — a God-given instinct, — and pure vanity.

Between desire for places of power to do good, and lust for official position for its own sake or to become simply conspicuous.

Digitized by Google

Between laudable aspirations and sinful ambitions.

The difficulty in distinguishing lies, not at extremes of these contrasts, but just where they seem to coalesce, to know just where the line should be drawn between the good and the evil. It is often plain to observers that one has crossed into the evil, but not to one's own conscience.

The peril is, on the good side, that men, fearing to run into the evil, will not enthusiastically prosecute the necessary good thing; that, fearing to overdo, they will do too little, and thus they will be forever a timid and negative character. There are morbidly conscientious people so fearful of doing wrong that they never very zealously or forcibly do the good they ought to do. They are good, shrinkingly, fearfully good for nothing that is aggressive or powerful for self or others. And it is in self-development, up to the allowable line, that this dread of doing something wrong, which leads to doing so little good, is most repressive. There is danger always, to be sure, of going over the line, but far better come up to it with all the aroused energies of the nature, even if the momentum drives a little over it, than to halt and shiver so far away from the line as to forfeit all conquering power. It will be easy to retreat to the right if the going too far was caused by sincere earnestness to do good.

In a striking picture Satan is represented as holding a man with all his might on the side of evil. The man is struggling to get to the line of right-

Digitized by Google

eousness and is steadily gaining on Satan. Now he is near the line and makes a last desperate effort. Satan, realizing that he is being defeated, gives him one powerful push over the line, saying, "I would just as soon have you too far on that side."

The Christian life of power is really determined by a keenly conscientious vision of the narrow line between the most aggressive good and the first approach of evil. Truly the way of Christ is narrow and his paths straight. The negative life is never approved by Christ. In his eyes it is sinful to hide the talent in a napkin lest some wrong use be made of it; it is sinful not to do with our might what our hands find to do.

With these general principles in mind we now study the three groups of self-developing duties:

First group, the activities which initiate habits of self-sustenance and incidental growth.

Second group, activities which begin courses of conscious self-development to power, to coördination, and to beauty as the perfection of these powers.

Third group, activities which lead to pleasure and enthusiasm to attain the richest results.

I. The first group of duties for the conservation of self relates to simple sustenance of life in all its aspects. This includes necessary eating, rest, sleep, and all other things which make for the preservation of health and physical life. In his relations with the other man who is also engaged in self-cultivation, the good man obeys the law, "Thou shalt love

Digitized by Google

thy neighbor as thyself," by being in every way perfectly harmless to him. He will not encroach a hair's breadth on the rights of anyone else. Herbert Spencer's formula of justice[1] is thoroughly discriminating as affecting the other man: "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not on the equal freedom of any other man." Under this formula he enumerates the rights of every individual to physical integrity, to the uses of natural media like light and air and land, and certain other specific rights such as the right to property, material and incorporeal; to gifts and bequests; to free exchange and free contract; to free industry; to free belief and worship; to free speech and publication. But Spencer's formula of individual freedom rightly does not restrict to doing no harm to self in the larger and higher sense. Self also has rights as against a man's foolish indulgence and excesses, even if it could be shown that these are harmless to other men. Since all life runs into habits, the Christian man will early form right habits of eating. He will eat to live, not live to eat. Every man has his peculiarities of digestion and assimilation, and he will seek to know these thoroughly and learn just what food and what quantity of food will best minister to his physical vitality, and at what hours this should be taken. He will make a religion of his eating and regard it a grievous sin to injure his wonderful body for the mere pleasure of appetite.

[1] Spencer, "Principles of Ethics," Vol. II, p. 46.

Digitized by Google

Everything cries out to us that we must renounce!
Thou must go without, go without!
This is the song every hour sings to us hoarsely,
Die and come to life.[1]

Here many good men transgress, and at cost of an early decline of power and the shortening of life at the end where it should have the culmination of effectiveness.

But what can be done for such people whom dyspepsia does not bring to terms, nor gout be able to discipline? What can be said to show them the awful waste of magnificent possibilities on sinful dinner tables? In drink, of course, the Scripture rule is total abstinence from all that is harmful at all and strict moderation in what is pure and wholesome. It is unnecessary here, surely, to recount the steps of abandonment of intoxicating liquors by good people individually, socially, and now almost wholly medicinally.

The man who desires to make the most of his life will carefully follow all the remarkable experiments at better eating, like Fletcherism, vegetarianism, and so on, distinguishing between wisdom and passing fads.

There is much growth that is spontaneous and incidental in hours of sleep and recuperation. It is our duty to secure the best conditions for growth by judicious habits in all the lowest rounds of life.

II. The second group of duties for the conservation of self is made up of activities which begin consciously —courses of self-development. This is not the place,

[1] Goethe.

Digitized by Google

however, to discuss systems of physical culture, of intellectual broadening and of memory enriching, of social powers, moral, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth by training and exercise. The Scripture duty is clear that every man must strenuously and always conserve and use every power of his nature as a distinct talent for which he must give account.

Man is often unconscious of the number and quality of his talents. Many a man hides five talents and thinks he is failing to use only one. "Mute inglorious Miltons" there are who grow to middle life before they or anyone else discovers they can follow and express God's lofty thoughts. General Grant tanned leather very poorly without knowing that he could handle a million men superbly and make of them an overwhelming fighting machine. Here is where the church owes its highest duty to young men and women and has its greatest opportunity. It must have such broad and varied activities in its programme that the possibilities of its younger people will be discovered for themselves and to others. Unworked gold and diamond mines are in our churches because no one is prospecting for them. Opportunities offered for specific work are the touchstone that locates the treasured talents. Open doors to special usefulness given by the church are also open doors to see splendid souls.[1]

[1] "The standard of morality is primarily an end not a law. The end is an ideal of self." — MUIRHEAD, "Ethics," p. 151.

"Love does not aim simply at the conscious good of the beloved object, it is not satisfied without perfect loyalty of heart; it aims at its own completeness." — GEORGE ELIOT, "Romola."

Digitized by Google

Let us consider a few specifications in this vital matter.

What shall be the reading of the Christian man in these days? Assuming that he has had a fairly good schooling and has become a lover of books, or desires to be, what shall he select? There is the daily paper which he must read, but unless he wants to read nothing else, he must learn to read it not a minute beyond its real profit to him. Because the daily paper is a recreation and a dissipation, all the reading time of many Christians goes to it.

There is therefore need of unremitting effort to get to books — books bought, books from the library, books borrowed from friends. He should fill his living room with them and have all the best constantly in his way — on his desk, on the tables, dressing bureau, everywhere. He should start conversation about books with good readers, read book reviews, go into old book stores, into the best new book stores. There are the new worlds where every man can be his own Columbus. It was a little flock of birds that led Christopher Columbus away from richest America to the small islands of the Antilles. So the unclean birds of unsavory novels lead many a man into swamps among reptiles of the tropics. In boyhood an old friend of the author read a sentence, and for sixty years has fought the vile suggestions of that sentence.

Books often make great men, and they make character in all men. The lover of good books has the

Digitized by Google

closest company of great men and lives in a paradise all his own. "A wonderful thing is a book," says Carlyle, "perhaps take it all in all the most wonderful thing in human civilization, the most powerful thing."

The old Christian rule of having week-day books and Sunday books is well worth while. The Sunday as a day of heaven and eternity come into life, one in every seven, is its sufficient defense, as Prof. Taylor Lewis argued. We cannot make Sunday a rest day by vacancy of mind and lounging body, we must make it more than cessation of daily work by filling it with Christly service and worship. Hence the Sunday newspaper is the greater wrong to its readers than to its makers, great as that wrong is. It is idle to discuss whether it was made and printed on Sunday; the wrong is that it is to be read on Sunday. He is a fool whether he is a sinner or not. He is opening the door into what might be heaven and eternal things of power and joy and letting in the stench, the little things, the daily struggle and stress. These flood him when he needs rest from these and life in the altitudes with God.

He ought to read books on Sunday that are worthy of the day made for God's man, — the great classics on the Christian life of service and the inner life of communion with God. He needs books that will make his Christian life great and rich and exhilarating; old books that will come with the touch of the hands of the Christ and his blessing to a man.

Digitized by Google

Carlyle says, "All that mankind has done, thought, or been is lying in magic presentation in the pages of books."

Reading of books should aim for definite results. The question to ask is not only what is a man reading, but what is he reading for? There is a place, properly, for entertaining and humorous reading, and to a tired mind this is a considerable place, but reading is too mighty in possibility of power for a man to give to fun most of the time devoted to it. That would be like making his principal meal every day three courses of dessert and one of strong food, or having recess at school for five hours and study for one hour. The results aimed at should be enriching knowledge on many subjects and culture of mental powers always. It is a fine thing for a business man or a professional man to adopt a specialty to study, like some particular science or some literary art or historical subject. Following a specialty gives the enthusiasm so much needed in book study. It gives, too, the sense of doing something thoroughly which in these days of high standards of efficiency in business is necessary to the earnest man's real satisfaction.

Religious books the Christian needs to select with equal care. There is such a wealth of marvelously interesting, soul-stirring books of biography, doctrinal and ethical discussion, moral and social reform, missionary movements, Christian progress, and Biblical helps that every man should get the best. The

Digitized by Google

tired man must fly from dullness in religious books as he would from half-cooked meals. Consult reviews for the best, and talk with bookmen who know their business.

Conversational power should be cultivated by every Christian. For the joy there is in it, the great usefulness in it, and the reflex mental culture which only expression can give, learn to talk well, learn how to listen to inspire others to talk well, and to guide social intercourse. This social and intellectual development is of the richest character, and it is all the more important because so many are indifferent to it.

The cultivation of personal powers for an enriched and influential individuality very clearly should have in view their coördination in order to the completeness of the whole nature of man. Culture which is so intellectual that it utterly ignores the need for social development does this at the expense of the intellectual development itself; culture of the reasoning faculties which neglects the esthetic and the emotional becomes unbalanced reasoning power, and its influence upon others is ineffective; the moralist who rejects religion and the Christian man who does not cultivate keen conscientiousness are both lopsided. Man has a seven-sided nature and the sides overlap in such a way that the largest life of any part is possible only when all is at its best. It is the whole man who thinks or feels or acts or worships. There is therefore imperative need of full-

Digitized by Google

rounded, full-orbed manhood, and never was this need greater than in this day when so many bulge at certain sides and are concave at others.

The highest touch of life is attractiveness or living beauty. Real beauty is not something tacked on or painted on; it is the expression of the perfection of any nature. Piety becomes the beauty of holiness when it is Christlikeness. Intellectual powers become charming at their best, and social powers fascinating, and art a thrilling pleasure. Beauty is a by-product, as joy so often is, and both come as a reward for seeking perfection and largest life. We may use beauty, therefore, as a test of how far we have progressed in our self-development. When our work becomes really attractive to others, when the glorious touch of beauty is upon it, we may take encouragement. First, power in all self-culture; then coördination; then beauty.[1] Plato says, "That education is the best which gives to the body and to the soul all the beauty and all the perfection of which they are capable." Charles Eliot Norton says, "Beauty has played an immense part in the development of the highest qualities in human beings." And Oliver S. Marden, "A taste for the beautiful will not only increase one's capacity for happiness, but also one's efficiency." Jacob Riis, that lover of the poorest poor, reminds us of what every worker

[1] It is well known that the Greek word for beauty (kalon) was used both for beauty and for goodness. The Stoic maxim was "Only the beautiful is good." Christians may say, "The really good is beautiful."

Digitized by Google

among them knows, "The physical hunger of the poor is not half so bitter as their starving for the beautiful. All children love beauty and beautiful things."

III. The third group of duties for the conservation of self may properly lead to pleasure. The old moralists talked much of happiness as the chief end of life. The heaven of the old preachers was wholly happiness. We have gone too far to the other extreme of bald utility in rebound from this teaching and have almost put heaven out of practical thinking and motives of life. Let us now remember that Christ talked very much of joy, of his own joy which he desired to give to his disciples. The angels said to the shepherds that Christ's coming would be tidings of great joy to all people.

How shall we think rightly of joy and pleasure? Shall we see that it means the perfect working of the human machine? Shall we understand that it is joy to eat, to think, to decide, to act, to prosecute all the things of life when we live aright, doing God's will? Joy is the immediate reward of Christly living to the good man himself just as beauty is the appearance of his life to others. The monkish idea was that it is sinful to enjoy joy when it comes from righteous living. The Bible idea is that joy is strengthening and further develops power — "the joy of the Lord is your strength." Abiding in Christ, bearing fruit as the branch in him, being pruned for richer fruitage, this brings the joy of Jesus and makes

Digitized by Google

that joy full. So again joy becomes a test of one's progress. When Christian duty becomes a pleasure, and Christian worship a delight to the soul, and all Christian work exhilarating, we have made some progress indeed.

Digitized by Google

XI

REALIZING THE CHRISTIAN HOME

THE modern Christian man, with a few noble exceptions, does not seem to have measured the real significance of home. His meager sense of parental opportunity is amazing. Because he is keen to see every business advantage, alert for every chance to win friends for trade or his profession, and wide awake to the latest and best efficiency in daily work, his neglect of his children — immeasurably his greatest asset — is all the more idiotic.

The first great parent was Abraham. His responsibility was for the care of all the nature of his son, Isaac. He was the physical provider, — which is all some men are who regard themselves as dutiful parents, — he was also the teacher, the sole teacher of his son; he was the only physician the boy had, probably, and his only social companion and moral guide, and he was also the religious head of his home. When Moses in the Decalogue set forth the duty of children to honor their father and mother, the father's function embraced all that Abraham was to Isaac — provider, teacher, physician, companion, moral guide, and priest in the household.

Digitized by Google

The father is yet to the child the representative of the authority of God as the fifth commandment has enjoined it. The fifth commandment is properly in the first table of the law — one of the duties to God, the duty to God's representatives in authority, the father and the mother. The fatherhood of the day of Moses made this a self-evident proposition.

The father's responsibility is in no particular less to-day. The difference is chiefly that now he has trained specialists to assist him at every point, but they are essentially his personally selected assistants, and the father's responsibility remains for all that concerns the welfare of his child. He must assume responsibility for the kind of physician attending his child in sickness and for the kind of teacher he has in the public school or in private schools. He should ever be the closest comrade of his boy, the best friend his daughter knows. If he is not he will suffer in the evening of his life the alienation of his children, — the fatal effect of the lack of such parental fellowship. He must train them in all virtue and noble habits, remembering that the first religious center was the home, not a church, and the first religious minister was the father.

The matter of parental authority is vital, not the joke some newspapers and novelists make it. In the present transition from the harsh and unbending parenthood of some of the fathers, who, wielding authority like a tyrant, to the suasion of wiser training in love, there is in many cases neither authority

Digitized by Google

exercised nor good training yet begun. We are in chaotic interregnum in the family condition.

What is the Christian view of parental authority? Surely it is to be a real authority of the father and mother to rule the house. It is idle to speak of their responsibility for the home if they are not to be given power and right to govern. But all Christian government in the home or school or state is a government of righteous law. It may not be arbitrary or whimsical or tyrannical in methods. The child has many unquestionable rights to the best opportunities for happiness, training, and love in the home. That children have rights was, a few years ago, to some fathers, a new and startling subject, but it is now a commonplace of moral discussion. Government in the Christian sense is the conservation of the rights of all the governed. Rules and regulations in the home should be self-evidently right and for the good of all. Authority is complete in the infancy of the son or daughter, and is gradually lessened during the years of growth, until at majority it ends. The wise parent so graduates it and so develops self-control in the child.

What will happen when the sensible father will so adjust business and the mother social demands to meet their sacred opportunity as parents? Their home from the beginning of married life would be the perfection of joy, their children would have their spiritual life awakened in earliest consciousness and would develop uninterruptedly in every virtue,

Digitized by Google

grace, and intellectual accomplishment. They would become the deepest satisfaction of the parents' hearts in mature life and their guardians and exceeding great joy in old age. Business success of any kind, social conquests as society queens, are small and mean without a child's love and respect, and bitter at the price of children ruined or dwarfed. The fiendish practice of vagabond beggars of crippling their children has its counterpart in practices of our first citizens which cripple and dwarf the soul and character of their children. The children are neglected or turned over to the ignorance or blundering of nurses and servants, while father is becoming a millionaire and mother a leader at balls and theater parties, from which she returns long after midnight, only to sleep nearly all next day, or, if she rises early, to be irritable, unreasonable, and full of foolish whims. God forgive them! they know not what they do!

How, then, shall the good man regard his home? First of all, as the training center for his children's lives. All else must be subordinate to this. Or, rather, the home must be made for the children the incomparable glory of a successful fatherhood and motherhood. The home must be homelike to the child, a free, happy atmosphere for him. It may be the place to which the boy or girl will run in preference to any street corner or other resort.

Is this easy to accomplish? The most thoughtful and devoted Christian parents have not found it so in these days. It will require constant planning of

Digitized by Google

plays and amusements for the children by these parents; a liberal supply of children's books and periodicals, now so numerous; a judicious hospitality to other children, and the absolute freedom of the house to the children under regulations of order and discipline that will of themselves develop character. There is no business so complicated and full of problems as the training of children. Some of that deeply serious thinking given to children's needs which the father gives to business problems will solve these home problems. A study of child nature and some knowledge of best methods of training are necessary. This requires time, but there is no substitute for that genuine sympathy with the child which is only thus acquired. The father who comes so close to his child saves him and saves himself as well.

Henry Drummond's [1] thought of the ethical value of the family is sublime. The mother gives love, the father righteousness. The chapter on the "Evolution of the Father" is a fine piece of scientific thinking in Drummond's finest literary style; it is excelled only by the chapter on the "Evolution of the Mother," which is exquisite in expression, warmth of feeling, and rich suggestiveness. He shows how deep love between the father and the mother, husband and wife, comes through the child. But how sad for the children, even more than for the husband and wife, when "Betsey and I Are Out"! It is so in some so-called Christian homes.

[1] Drummond, "The Ascent of Man," p. 310 et seq.

Digitized by Google

There was a stock of temper we both had for a start,
Although we ne'er suspected 'twould take us two apart;
I had my various failings, bred in the flesh and bone,
And Betsy, like all good women, had a temper of her own;
So I've talked with Betsy and Betsy has talked with me,
And we agreed together that we can never agree;
But when she dies, I wish she would be laid by me,
And lyin' together in silence, perhaps we will then agree.[1]

Home, too, is the place of the larger life for all. Daily business has its narrow and narrowing limits; the profession, whatever it is, its monotony of drudgery; the school, its hard lessons; but home is the life boundless in its reach. In the home the rich literature of the ages may gather to us the great and the good of all time; the larger interests of humanity may be studied in books and around the hospitable board when wisely the door stands open to the best men and women; the love of all for each other, their faith in each other and profound mutual respect, and the joyous fellowship of closest hearts will bring out the best in everyone in the home and make it the realm of sweetest joy and friendships warmer than blood.

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise that has survived the fall!
Thou art the nurse of virtue; in thine arms
She smiles, appearing as in truth she is,
Heaven-born, and destined to the skies again.
Thou art not known, where pleasure is adored, —
That reeling goddess . . .
For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
And finding in the calm of truth-tried love,
Joys which her stormy rapture never yields.

. . . . . .

[1] Will Carleton, Poems, "Betsy and I Are Out."

Digitized by Google

> But Discipline at length,
> O'erlooked and unemployed, grew sick and died,
> Then study languished, emulation slept,
> And virtue fled.[1]

The home which is the place of the larger life is not an accident. It is the result of plans and endeavors and consecrated parental wisdom and love. Such a home costs much, and those unwilling to pay the absolute, undiscountable cost will never have it. The price to be paid is not so much in money as in time and devotion. But there is no risk as to returns of home investment. Profits are sure.

When such investment of time and devotion is made in the home, it will become the place of rest and recuperation for life's outer work.

Rest comes most surely when a man turns with enthusiasm to the higher life. The lounging attempts of an active mind to do nothing and think nothing during waking hours is a failure. And the greater the exhaustion, which does not lead to sleep, the more terribly do the nerves and brain keep cantering around the pole they have been tied to all day. The wise man leaves the thoughts of the day and thinks of God and his world of grandest ideals for man. In the refreshing breezes of such spiritual and intellectual excursions his fevered nerves become steady, strong; they become exhilarated with renewed life. Then the man is surprised to note how much of his nature has been unemployed in the excessive use of

[1] Cowper, "The Task."

Digitized by Google

brains, nerves, and muscles on a specific daily work, and that this spiritual, larger nature does not draw upon the same energies, but seems to furnish its own resources, which overflow to the wonderful recuperation of the whole man.

This is for the waking hours at home. Of course there is need of sufficient sleep, according in length to the temperament of the individual. But how get this sleep in most reinvigorating sweetness? By this same complete switching off to the larger life. To prove the truth of these statements we appeal to the experience of earnest workers in the church and in philanthropy who, after a strenuous day's work or a hard week's work at business or in the professions, give themselves enthusiastically in the home and church to Christ's service. One such man told of his Sunday headache disappearing in church and Sunday-school work. To the exhausted man who for years has only lounged at home this may seem an absurd philosophy, but surely his method of resting has not brought good results as he drags himself back to work, and the earnest Christian's method has been effective every time. Great merchants have kept young into fourscore years as they rested from business by doing Christian work, and manual laborers have returned to work with new efficiency. Let all men try it practically; they should not reason foolishly against it.

Home ought to be the shrine of more than kinship relations. There may be friendships of the tenderest

Digitized by Google

intimacies and profoundest regard. There must be such friendship and true comradeship between husband and wife or they lose the supreme value of the marriage union of two lives. As Dr. H. Clay Trumbull argues, "Friendship is the master passion"[1]; even conjugal love must have friendship added to remain pure and ennobling. And between children and parents, brothers and sisters, there may be such friendships which are spiritual kinships beside which blood relationships are feeble and fleeting.

It may be that in the wise beginnings of the home lie the foundations of the house of happiness it may become. There is the promise of fewer divorces, and still more a pledge of truly good homes. The latest movements of home reformers are concentrating upon better beginnings of all homes instead of upon the wrecks of some of them. A scientific study of the best conditions for happy marriage, age, temperament, preparation; how to produce the social conditions that will promote sufficient knowledge of each other in prospective marriages; how parents can assist and not vex into desperation; in short, of all the profound questions of married life, will be preventative rather than so costly curative. A literature upon these subjects is being created, some of it very good and much of it harmful as yet to the immature children to whom it is undiscriminatingly recommended by people who have had no children nor have tried it wisely upon any children.

[1] See Dr. Trumbull's book with this title.

Digitized by Google

Love stories we will always have with us, and who does not enjoy them if they are pure and sweet? Pity the mortal who does not! But in addition to sweet and pure love stories there is need of booklets and tracts for young people before and after marriage, such as were once more current than they are to-day. They should be adapted to modern times. They should clearly and entertainingly set forth home duties and opportunities. Conjugal love will last all the better if reënforced by conscientious regard for mutual duties and rights. These duties and rights are not so self-evident to all as it might appear. The husband must provide generously for all the needs of the wife, personal as well as for housekeeping, that she may not live in pinching want of money for her own needs as did one good wife all her days. Her husband had plenty, but he gave to her so stingily and made her account for every dollar so systematically that she nervously dreaded the necessary request for a little money because of the recurring inquisition as to the use made of the last small remittance. How astonishing was this in a really well-to-do home! The wife should be the business partner, economically and wisely managing home expenses, first. Home management is a mutual right and duty. Husband and wife are equal partners in his income and in her expenditures. Both need to remember always

"There are no rights without duties,
No duties without corresponding rights."

Digitized by Google

When marriage is begun and continued in mutual regard and Christian love, there is no divorce at the end and no heartburnings on the way.

Home gives the opportunity for hospitality, that Christian grace and duty of richest reward, if done without grudging and with wise planning. The humblest home may share its table even if it has no spare room. There is profound wisdom in the scriptural injunction to observe hospitality without grudging. When children come in contact around the table with wisely selected men and women, they will have an opportunity for broad culture mentally, socially, and morally which is not to be obtained in any other way. Then gracious friendships are formed through hospitality which bless all the life. The Christian custom of former years of frequently inviting ministers, teachers, physicians, and leaders in society to one's hospitable board was repaid a thousandfold in the children's lives. Many a man traces the start of a great life to contact with a fine character at his father's table. It is an irreparable, absolutely irreparable, loss and monstrous wrong to our children that has permitted the abandonment of hospitality to good men and substituted the social dissipations of the dinner at midnight, from which children are wisely excluded. Surely some parents can be persuaded to restore this right of their children to meet in hospitality men and women who would bless and ennoble their lives. It has been restored to many homes by the earnest efforts of far-seeing pastors.

Digitized by Google

Love is the paramount Christian duty in the home. Christian love reserves its best to give at home. Often the business man who is suave and obliging all day, even though his patience is sorely tried by exasperating vexations, is tempted to let loose the vials of his wrath when he gets home, where he thinks no business interests can suffer. But Christian love forbids this. In many a home the poor tired wife and mother has been all day long just as sorely tried as he. The man who gives way to the temptation only puts the bitterness into his own cup and thorns into his own pillow at home. Yet, he asks, what is home for if not to relax? He thinks his temper will be the better for the explosion and relief, but will it not really be worse to-morrow because he has thus cultivated it all the more? And how long will the sweet temper of wife and children last in such an atmosphere?

The Christian home is the product of Christ's coming into the world. There is nothing finer, nothing more enjoyable, nothing more important to the progress of mankind. Let it be religious above all, with Christ himself as the head of the house. It is the home, not the individual, which is the unit of civilization and which measures what it shall be. Then will there be love like that of purest souls in oneness — love like that of which Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote to her husband, Robert Browning:

Digitized by Google

How do I love thee? let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight,
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as men turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.

Digitized by Google

XII

THE ETHICS OF SOCIAL LIFE

CHRISTIAN society is based upon noble friendship, good character, and intellectual affinity. It is the extended and more flexible home life where deeper tides than blood are flowing. In the country village or small town it is usually a neighborhood realm, but in the large city it cannot have geographic bounds. In its best form it is the thoroughly organized church with broad activities radiating from a powerful spiritual center.

Outside of the church society is best when inspired by some common benevolent, scientific, educational, or moral reform purpose. Fellowship in good work is the most satisfying to noble souls, and it is closer than fellowship of creed, or pleasure, or common profit. "There are two kinds of altruism: justice, and beneficence. Positive beneficence puts necessary restraints upon an individual's undeserved results of labor, displays of ability, blame, and praise. It regards duties to the sick and injured, the ill-used and endangered, gives pecuniary aid to relatives and friends and to the poor." [1]

[1] Herbert Spencer, "Ethics," Vol. II, p. 270.

Digitized by Google

But society, also, may rightly be for purely social pleasure. Man's social nature seeks expression beyond the home circle and loves companionship of men and women. The growth of lodges, leagues, societies, and associations of all kinds in civilized nations is stupendous. This is the expression of general brotherliness inspired by Christ's teachings. When innocently developed such organizations still further extend the brotherhood of man.

In simple social circles the duties are to regard each other's rights; to be truly brotherly in attitude, speech, and conduct, and to use the opportunity of these associations to do all the good possible to every member.

On what is the society of the "four hundred" based? Purely, in last analysis, on money. Wealth admits to it, lack of wealth excludes. No matter how the money was acquired, no questions are asked so long as the possessor can keep out of jail. There is no pretense of real affection or warm friendships, though these exist between some individuals of the set in spite of all that is against sincere heart-throbs in such an atmosphere. But no one claims that affection or mutual regard is necessary to "society." Nor is there a moral standard, for divorcees and rakes of unsavory name are prominent in such society, and men of dishonest business are there.

But this is not civilized society after the Christian standard; it is heathenish, though it owes its opportunity to have wealth to Christian law; it is shameful

Digitized by Google

in all eyes but its own, which are brazen, and its influence on every effort to make the world better is demoralizing. It deserves and it is getting the contempt of good men and women who have wealth but who have also decency and good character. In a republic like America the society of the "four hundred" is a monstrous anachronism. It is a reversion to feudalism, but without the knighthood or the womanhood of feudalism. It is a reversion farther back to the worst days of Pompeii and Corinth.

The duty of Christians to the conventional customs and manners of polite society is worth considering. When these conventional manners have the authority of good reason and long standing no Christian will be indifferent to them. He will seek to become acquainted with the usages of good society and conform to them. As a rule there are good morals in good manners. But "forms of society are never exhaustive expressions of duty, only general outlines. Hence they always need to be supplemented by the free moral spirit." [1] And when these forms or fashions are the whimsical creations of mere commercialism or flunkeyism they are to be followed simply as they conform to good taste or comfort. However, all good fashions change with the progress of the world, and John Wesley's rule is sensible, "Be not the first to adopt the new, nor the last to abandon the old."

Society is of transcendent value because of the

[1] Bowne, "Principles of Ethics," p. 145.

Digitized by Google

friendship it renders possible. The man who has not formed a Jonathan and David friendship with some other man has lost life's best joy and inspiration. The love of man for man was the romantic love of the ancient Greek stories, and a revival of it in novels of to-day would make excellent companion tales to Damon and Pythias, Socrates and Plato. A good man calls out the richest in his friend and in turn finds his own soul surpassingly enriched. Friendship may embrace a group of men and women like that which gathered around Dr. Samuel Johnson and around Martin Luther to hear their remarkable table talks, or in the intellectual French salon, with its brilliant wit and wisdom and its many splendid characters. There are affinities esthetic, spiritual, and philanthropic as well as intellectual.

But there are men and women whose lives are merely a round of social excesses, who have no worthier purpose than to shine in cheap wit, in the despicable hypocrisies and lies of fashionable cliques and sets. We cannot but think of the shocking waste of money by these people, money with wonderful possibilities of power for good in our day, but we do not always stop to think that even worse is the awful waste of manhood and womanhood which, under other training, might have become ideal for righteousness, grace, and world-wide helpfulness.

Social life is simpler among working people, friendships deep and lasting, and fellowships in the "long evenings of civilization" helpful and satisfying.

Digitized by Google

The church should ever be planning to enrich life by more and more social gatherings to promote these ends for all the people.

So there may be friendships formed in college, friendships formed on the long journeys now so common among men, friendships made in the special stress and struggle of misfortune or suffering, — friendships which are the outcome of a score of experiences we may have in common with other men. Warm and emotionally cultivated friendships are the heart's need. The Occidental is cold in heart expression. The gain made by the inspiration of progress should not longer be offset in him by his loss of the oriental freedom of heart-to-heart manifestation.

To our charitable gifts to the poor and unfortunate should be added the touch of Christian social life. In the beautiful words of Lowell:

> The gift without the giver is bare;
> Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
> Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me!

So the problems of the poor, who are yet with us after two thousand years of Christ's lessons of love and brotherhood, are solved by men going to them and not by merely money sent. The object love sets is the development of self-help, a permanent cure for poverty. John Wesley, who was a master hand at what Dr. Briggs calls "adopting the life of voluntary poverty," "the finest Christian act of any day," used to have a handful of English coins

Digitized by Google

to give to the old people of his London chapel as he walked to the church door. This was the best that could be done in the almost hopeless industrial and social conditions of his day. Wesley was a wonder of generosity. Canon Farrar, in *The Outlook*, asks: "Which among his contemporaries equaled John Wesley in the versatility of his beneficences, in zeal of self-sacrifice, or in the luster of the example he has left to the world? Consider his supreme disinterestedness, his unparalleled courage, his indefatigable toils." But Wesley by personal association and marvelous evangelism lifted the poor to hope and better conditions. And this is now the charity of the good man who is wise. Of Charles Loring Brace of New York it is said that he was able to touch and improve three hundred thousand lives during his life.[1] This was largely through the Children's Aid Society.

Ruskin says, "Rogues are truly manufactured articles." They are made by society forcing them into unwholesome surroundings, vice-breeding and criminal from childhood. Pity comes from piety etymologically, and sympathy, better than pity, comes from Christians giving themselves to the unfortunate. "What is the spirit of Christ? I will tell you: He came not to be ministered unto; not to see how much he could gather into his bosom out of the lives of others; not to be petted and dandled and lifted along and fed, all the way with no

[1] Richard T. Ely, "Socialism," p. 260.

Digitized by Google

burden, no care, no work — not that. He came to minister." [1]

"Abstract justice," Ruskin declares, "would solve the question of national wealth." And for full justice to the working poor and to all the unfortunate and suffering, the modern spirit of Christ strives. But meantime benevolence which is not pauperizing, but brotherly aid in emergency, is the only Christian course to pursue.

Herbert Spencer strongly objects to organizations for charity with which all good people by personal work do not constantly and broadly coöperate — organizations which fall into the hands of officials who become either perfunctory or mere salary seekers. No one desires such constant personal reënforcement more than the sincere leaders in present-day, splendidly organized charities.

Conditions of vice and immorality are yet fearful in our large cities and towns, and these must be resolutely improved by social uplift and by the aggressively higher standards of good society. The attitude of some Christian people to these evils is amazing. In Berlin, Germany, the law regulating the giving of licenses to prostitutes requires that licenses may be given only to those who have been confirmed in the church and have taken their first communion.[2]

[1] C. H. Fowler, Sermons.
[2] C. L. Brace, "Dangerous Classes," p. 128.

Digitized by Google

Alas for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
O it was pitiful,
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none!

Christian benevolence sees in these lowliest and worst of human beings immeasurable possibilities. W. J. Dawson tells us: "It is possible that the very mire of London streets contains radium, the most tremendous agent of light and heat yet discovered by man; so in man himself, however low his state, there is the spark of God. We forget this or make it a rhetorical expression, but Christ acted as though his boast of the immense value of man were true. He inwove his life into all that is commonest in life." And G. Campbell Morgan says: "Now Jesus faces the crowd. Sympathy! Why? Because he is right with God he is right with men. The settlement of every social problem will be found in the return of man to God. Then he gets back to men."

Henry Drummond loved to point out that evolution always meant two things, sustenance and reproduction, and that reproduction is the struggle of life for the life of others. Every plant in the world lives for others. It sets aside something, costly, careful for the highest expression of its nature. The seed is the tithe of love which nature renders to man. It is life. Literally, scientifically, love is life. Nearly all the beauty of the world is love-

Digitized by Google

beauty — nearly all the music is love-music — nearly all the foods are love-foods, seeds, eggs, grains, and most fruits. The end of man is that which we had from the beginning that we love.[1]

The Duke of Argyle[2] calls altruism "the new and very affected name for the old familiar things we used to call charity, philanthropy, and love." Darwin's law is: "Those communities which included the greatest number of the most sympathetic members would flourish best." Prince Krapotkin[3] points out that there is a vast amount of coöperation in nature which we have overlooked in seeing the fierce struggle, as it seems, for existence. And Benjamin Kidd finds "a fund of altruistic feeling with which our civilization is equipped."

"Whose names are these?" Whereon the angel
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so!"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow men."
. . . . . .
And lo! 'twas Abou's name led all the rest.[4]

For the loving worm within its clod
Were diviner than a loveless God!

[1] Drummond, "The Ascent of Man."
[2] *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1894.
[3] *Nineteenth Century*, 1891, p. 340.
[4] Leigh Hunt.

Digitized by Google

XIII

CONSCIENTIOUS BUSINESS LIFE

THE longest time, the most strenuous efforts, the greatest expenditure of strength of most men is in everyday business activity. If they are not Christians in business the most of their life is without Christ. Never was this more so than to-day, for Gladstone says, "All the wealth of eighteen centuries was reproduced in the first fifty years of the nineteenth century, and as much again in the next twenty years."

There are many reasons for unchristian business, but no excuse, no plea that will avail on scriptural grounds. To say that no business at all can be conducted successfully on Christian principles in these days of dishonest competition is disproved by the splendid company of true Christians who are successful in business. What the objector means is that more money can be made immediately by dishonest gains. Still more made at once by burglary and open robbery! He tells us that many men are making these dishonest gains and shows that he is lusting for a share. But will he yield to this temptation to what is plain sin because he imagines that

Digitized by Google

he cannot be detected, when he would scorn to yield to riotous self-indulgence? In such business what becomes of his fellowship with God?

More money cannot now be made, in the long run, by dishonest business. The famous business houses that stand for a century and that command an unfailing and steadily growing patronage are honest. The illustrious men in business are above suspicion of small sharp practices. Even in advertising business the counsel of experts to all business men is: tell the truth, give a square deal, be candid and honest, and you will win the public. The newspapers under great headlines pillory the few national enterprises that have been corrupt, and the national and state laws are drawing the net tightly about them.

These are fundamental Christian principles in business life:

1. The Christian man must regard his business as his way of serving mankind. If in his mind it is only his way of making money there can be little Christian inspiration or satisfaction in it. But if he has a sense of life mission as he goes to his task, a feeling of divine call to his business as the work in which he is best fitted to help humanity in its upward progress, it becomes sacred instead of secular. His business office becomes a part of the extension of the Holy of holies which began when the veil of the temple was rent at Christ's death. After that, all the world was to become a sacred place and all things were to become holy and all activities prosecuted as in the

Digitized by Google

spirit of worship to God. More, in all his thoughts and plans God is looked upon by the Christian man as his partner in business.

Christ was on the Father's business when he fed the five thousand; so may the baker feel himself to-day. When Christ healed the blind man he was doing his Father's work; why may not the physician so feel about his own efforts to heal? When Christ washed his disciples' feet he was conscious that he was about the Father's business; so may the servant girl feel as she is busy with Monday's wash and Tuesday's ironing. When Christ gave the fishermen a great catch he was one of them; when he stilled the tempest and brought the boat to shore he was a sailor and a pilot with the rest. He was about his Father's business in the temple among the doctors, and he continued in it when he returned to Nazareth and became a carpenter. He drew no line of sacred and secular, but wiped out all such lines. Such a distinction is unchristian—it hurts both the church and business; it hurts business by eliminating religious inspiration and the divine partnership in business, and it hurts the church by withholding business enterprise and modern organization from her work.

2. Unless the Christian man's business really serves mankind in good, he must give it up. A business questionable as to its moral character or benefit to men is not questionable to Christian standards—it is wrong. Whatever is doubtful is at best negative

Digitized by Google

or useless, and to engage in it is to waste life and its power and opportunity. Is it objected that this would end several large lines of business that professing Christian men now engage in? Even so; but it will end their real fellowship with Christ if they do not end such business. Who can doubt that? John Wesley urges: "Gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can. Gain all you can by not hurting your neighbor in his substance or in his body."

The good of mankind must be considered to the broadest and deepest extent. For instance, it is good for men to be amused in a pure way, good for them to have the pleasure of the senses which does not involve sin. It is proper, therefore, for a Christian man to be a humorist like Mark Twain or Josh Billings, or a giver of pure pleasure like many entertainers. This is all the more so because the sense of humor[1] is a valuable moral asset. It prevents a man making a fool of himself by incongruities of manner or speech. Without it he says the absurd and undigested word and does the ridiculous thing. But with it he is helped to refined proprieties, tact, and power. In speaking either in public address or private conversation, in proper restraint, it gives delight and force to the truth. But the sense of humor is needed most to prevent overdoing of humor to the verge of the silly and beyond.

[1] "The sense of humor is a sense of a fundamental deformity where it exists in conduct or manners." — MACKENZIE, "Ethics," p. 295.

Digitized by Google

There are social needs of mankind, esthetic needs in music and art, and purely intellectual needs which should be ministered to in cultured power. It is right, therefore, not only to render such service, but also to prepare thoroughly for it.

In the same way providing for the needs of the table, of the home, of raiment is a proper method of service for Christlike men who do this in his name and within his laws. So also the great variety of professional service which ministers wisely to normal needs is Christian. Man's nature is so many sided and wonderful, and his development so complex, that every demand should be met by experts. But the test that all such work for men should be of positive benefit cannot be relaxed or compromised for indulgences which are harmful in the least or even simply wasteful.

The law of love in business was developed earlier in this volume. It is the Golden Rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." It is exact justice in all dealings rendered with expert knowledge as we would desire it if we were in the place of the customer or client. No more than justice is required, nor is loose generosity desirable. The highest efficiency and best product come when ethical justice exactly rules in all daily business. It will be well to reread Chapter II on this law of love as exact justice in daily activities.

3. The Christian man will steadily perfect his product, whether grown or manufactured, or his

Digitized by Google

service in transportation or distribution of material goods. He will go on to perfection by the general law of progress inherent in the Christian life. He cannot be satisfied with yesterday's results if to-day reveals some new possibility in what he is doing for man.

Practical improvement of product or service is limited by many factors, such as increased cost, possible facilities, and extent of business. It will therefore proceed more slowly than could be desired, but it should be a steady and real improvement.

In the professions — now at least six: medicine, teaching, journalism, law, statesmanship, and the ministry — the Christian will keep abreast of the latest light in all that is related to his work, will know the most approved methods and coördinations. He will not be the first to adopt the radically new, for that is to take the untested, nor the last to hold on to the old, for that is to hold on to what has been proven inferior.

When men are possessed of a monopoly either by the protection of a patent or by some combination with others, their opportunity is greatest for service and their duties are correspondingly weighty. The fixing of prices then is their sole responsibility and all the principles of justice — to do to others as they would be done by — should govern. More than what is just is robbery. The discovery and application of a new principle for human service by a remarkable invention deserves large reward and it is

Digitized by Google

proper to take it, but the money value of the patent is due to the presence of civilized society which needs it, and this society has equal rights in the invention or monopoly. Inventions differ so much in cost of production in relation to real value that the civil law wisely does not attempt to fix prices, but the Christian law will guide the good man in the matter.

4. Business has its sociological aspects and ethics. It is to be thought of as a whole, and every man is interested in the moral perfecting of the whole, for man's sake, not for business' sake in itself. In relations of workmen and employers, of producers and consumers, of professional men and laymen, there is necessary a mutual regard and coöperation for Christian results. Neither side can live to itself. Both will attain the best by the Golden Rule. Putting oneself into the other person's place gives the measure of our duty to him, but considering all sides, points the way to a better civilization.

5. To the Christian man all business is related to the progress of Christ's kingdom. Whatsoever he does will hasten or retard the coming of the King to his own in the world. It is this gospel idea which glorifies daily work into a religion. It is done no longer to men, but as unto God. The two tables of the law of stone coalesce into the fleshly table of the heart, the ten commandments into the one Golden Rule. And every act of obedience to the Golden Rule brings nearer that day when his will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Digitized by Google

XIV

THE DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN

PAUL highly esteemed his Roman citizenship before he was a Christian. He esteemed it no less after he became a Christian — probably more. He was born a citizen of no mean city, Tarsus, and he was the noblest Roman of them all. But there are Christian men in America who set small store upon their still grander citizenship; who vote very seldom, and then only when it is thoroughly convenient to their business or pleasure; who vote for party, right or wrong — mostly wrong; and who, for business reasons, postpone great civic reforms and purifications. Are they not mean citizens of the grandest country on earth?

The Christian man in a democracy, whether in the form of a republic or of a constitutional monarchy, owes to his country the duty of a citizenship which is distinctively Christian. Our citizenship is a real part of Christian life and religion. As George Washington [1] said, "Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence

[1] Washington, "Farewell Address."

Digitized by Google

of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles."

Citizens who are office-holders have the additional obligation to honesty and efficiency in all their duties. In the aggregate the office-holding class is large and rapidly increasing.

The voter in America is the real sovereign of the state and ought fully to realize this. He abdicates to a party or to a boss, but the full responsibility for all the party does or fails to do and for all bosses do, good or evil, is with the voters. That it requires millions of voters together to govern does not diminish the duty of each one, for the voting is always an individual act, and the larger the number of voters the greater the field of duty to influence others to vote right. Here lies the citizen's clear obligation to form political parties and to work for them aright. But it is just as much a duty to form parties as means to righteous government and to have party fealty only when candidates are right and principles righteous.

In America the citizen's duty can only be performed in the light of intellect and conscience. The citizen must keep informed about political progress, about men and movements, study and develop political ideals, and courageously decide and advocate the right men and measures. Right voting needs to be supplemented by influencing others to vote right. The great body of good voters must become as aggres-

Digitized by Google

sive as the patriots in war to win and maintain good government.

The duty to inform himself about governmental affairs was always upon the voter, but never so emphasized as to-day when extraordinary developments in our government are in progress. It is the day of the discussion of the commission plan of city government; the proper regulation by nation and state of trusts, railroads, and all public utilities; the scientific adjustment of the tariff; universal arbitration; labor and capital conciliation; uniform divorce laws; popular election of United States senators; the initiative, the referendum, and the recall; woman suffrage; labor questions such as compensation for industrial injuries, coöperative schemes, profits-sharing, and many others equally complicated and far-reaching. Many of these plans, if adopted, will work fundamental changes in our democracy for better or for worse. It is in the highest degree necessary that they be discussed and decided by the ablest intelligence and patriotism of the voters. The true Christian spirit feels all these obligations and prepares to meet them as in God's sight.

This new era of constructive politics is calling out great leaders of noblest spirit and sternly retiring the old corrupt bosses. The Christian voter faces a glorious outlook which should inspire to profound devotion to civic duty. He must recognize the Christian origin and character of the American state. He will resist all powerful efforts now being made to

Digitized by Google

eliminate the Christian elements from state activities; for example, the reading of the Bible in the public schools; chaplains in Army, Navy, and public institutions; the day of Thanksgiving; the Christian oath, and the general recognition of God and Christ in many ways by the government. Some of these attempts have succeeded in certain states, and there the Christian voter should make every effort to restore them, not heeding the specious plea that such Christian elements involve a union of church and state. The recognition of God in organic law is a fact in most of the states, but it has not diverted state funds to sectarian uses nor persecuted for their religion any people, whatever their creed. "A nation ought to be but one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth or stature of an honest man, for look what the ground and causes are of single happiness to one man, the same ye shall find it for a whole state."[1]

The Christian welcomes the trend of modern government to larger service for the nation, the state, and municipality. He recognizes the extent of opportunity of a righteous government to promote the welfare of the people without pauperizing them or dwarfing individual initiative, the wise general welfare work which indeed gives the only opportunity to the individual often restricted by the tyranny of the strong or by combinations and trusts.

The duty of praying for those in authority is definitely enjoined by the Scriptures. Such prayer

[1] John Milton, Preface to "Reformation in England."

Digitized by Google

should be made in the congregation by the pastor and others, in family prayer, and in private prayer. Prayer for another brings the divine blessing upon that other, but by reflex influence it deepens the interest of the man who prays. More, since prayer is communion with God, the making of petitions upon such subjects brings the mind and soul to God's Bible thought that his authority is delegated to human government.

Civic office is an attractive opportunity to the good man. In the remarkable extension of governmental functions still further going on, the government touches the life of the people at many vital points. The activities of the advocates of the purification of food products and preparations, of those who are directing the work of state and nation for better health conservation, those who seek to bring about forest conservation, of the several recent national commissions upon education, rural life, and other subjects, of those who carry out great schemes of the care and cure of criminal and pauper classes, of irrigation and reclamation of waste lands, of conservation of national resources in mines and waterways, of the Agricultural Department which gives such marvelous assistance to farmers, and of the Labor Bureau, are illustrations of the way in which state and national government are partaking of the philanthropic and reform inspiration. Statesmen are profoundly impressed that a new era in democracy is upon the world, only to be compared with the

Digitized by Google

French Revolution and the making of the American constitution.

The citizen is the final arbiter of these momentous questions of civilization, every one of which is also a movement of the kingdom of Christ. The Christian citizens of the United States in this generation will make history of more importance in human progress than any body of men since the advent of Christ, certainly since the Reformation.

It is therefore a time for devout citizenship. The pillar of cloud and of fire must be invoked, the King of kings must be enthroned in America, and his subjects must become knightly in personal courage and initiative. They must be soldiers in a grand army calling out the genius of Grant in organization, "hammering" the way to victory and to social peace and prosperity, with righteousness.

Digitized by Google

XV

A VITAL MEMBER OF CHRIST'S BODY

THE local church which a Christian joins is a part of the real body of Christ through which the Spirit is to express Christ to men. If this ecclesiastical body of Christ is vital in every part and in all its members, it will find expression as on the day of Pentecost by winning the world to him, and as after Pentecost by mutual love and helpfulness among the saved. No one individual can very largely express Christ. Only a church organized for all the broad work for humanity which Christ inspires, prosecuting it in one accord and filled with the Holy Spirit, can fully represent Christ among men. No one individual is the complete body of Christ; the church is his body, his organism for expression and service. "One Christian is an organ of Christ, the church is his organism." [1]

Practically therefore the first duty to Christ of the saved man is to choose which church he will join. Which local church, of course; for it is in the local church chiefly that he must work, and the local church is the place of direct contact with the unsaved

[1] Dr. J. H. Jowett, Sermon.

Digitized by Google

world and of personal fellowship with other disciples. The local church, however, belongs to a denomination, one of the one hundred and eighty denominations, large and small, in America. Usually the choice is made for him by his parents in early childhood. In the church so chosen he should stay unless commanding reasons for a change come to him. But the man who realizes the tremendous significance of life, and who knows what best organization and highest ideals for spiritual life means for usefulness, will at least open the question as to where and what his church workshop shall be.

1. He should study the Scriptures, especially Christ's teachings on doctrine and life, and the church's conformity to them. In this study he should not be severely critical, he should always remember the infirmities of human nature; yet justly and earnestly he should secure a reasonably close Christ-likeness in a church.

2. Meantime he should get the test of actual and earnest service in the church where he finds himself. Certain personal habits and adaptation may make that field the most productive for him on the whole.

3. It is important to know the denomination's power and prestige, its leaders at the time, its methods of work, breadth of sympathy and outlook, spiritual life, as well as its general organization, doctrines, and history.

4. The choice of a local church is for the family as well as for self, and for the spiritual welfare and train-

Digitized by Google

ing of the children. In the church to which the man inclines, will the children be likely to acquire most fully the Christlike spirit and character, the love of earnest and self-sacrificing service, and the best instruction in Christian truth and living? Then let the father and mother join there that the children may be saved from the worldliness and unbelief and even the open sin which might follow as a result of a mistaken choice.

5. The choice should be made in the spirit of a Christian worker seeking largest service and of a soldier of Christ seeking a battlefield for righteousness. The choice should not be made for social prestige, nor yet for ease in work or giving. The mistake should be avoided of the man who chose a certain church because, as he said, "it will not interfere with any business or politics." The choice should fall on a church which the man can sincerely regard as a church of Christ.

To hold that a man can be a good Christian without joining any church is the same as holding that he can be a good Christian without accepting the Bible. The one is Christ's word, the other is Christ's organism for work. The church is the body of Christ serving him as a human body serves a man's spirit, by carrying out his purpose, expressing his thought, and showing his love. The church is eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, and more to the spirit of Christ. The individual Christian must feel himself a fraction, a part of this body of Christ, never complete, but

Digitized by Google

with the whole church in Christ. The church must regain this organic consciousness in Christ.

Since the Reformation individualism has ruled in protestant churches. The individual conscience is held supreme in personal life, the individual is preached to and appealed to, and the church has disintegrated. The rights and the whims of the individual govern and the church as a unit is ignored. Instead of a household of faith the church is a boarding house in which each person pays as little as he must—usually a set price for a seat at table; grumbles all he wishes; goes elsewhere for a meal when he desires, and feels little responsibility for the management. The pastor appeals to the boarders by the menu he presents, and the trustees insist that he must hold them as boarders or resign. When we come to socialize the church into the household of God, then will come the atmosphere of the home, the oneness of the common new birth, deepest affinities, kinships, common purposes, united sense of responsibility. The services will be as family Thanksgivings, Christmas gatherings, and home reunions around the table. It is the pressing immediate duty of all church members to bring about this church unity and organic consciousness in Christ. He must seek in every way to develop the vast unused resources of the church, the army of unemployed men and women she has, the Lord's money so shamefully wasted on self and pleasure, and the talents wholly buried in business and amusements.

Digitized by Google

This means the bringing of business into religion. All modern business enterprise and its power of organization was developed in Christian lands, under the influence and spirit of the gospel. Shall this business enterprise and organization be denied to the work of Christ through the church? Business houses employ a man whose sole mission is the new gospel of efficiency, the duty of devising improvements in organizing all forces, dropping all that can be replaced by the more effective, and developing still more all that succeed. Let the children of light who in the world do service so wonderfully in material business, to serve men's bodies, serve the Lord in the same effective manner. What folly not to be enlisted for the saving of men's souls by the same enterprise!

There is much confusion in Christian thought concerning the duty of church attendance. It is well known that not one half of the members of the average church have any habit of regular attendance upon even Sunday services; that "scarcely one tenth attend prayer meetings"; that not one fifth will rally to the special evangelistic meetings earnestly called by the pastor and his helpers. Is church-going, then, a duty wholly optional? Is it comparatively so unimportant that social engagements of a minor character, the accidental visit of a friend, a slight indisposition of body, a lodge meeting, an entertainment, or other calls like these, are a sufficient excuse for not going? What really is the

Digitized by Google

import of a meeting for religious worship and for work in the church? Is the cause of Christ in any sense dependent upon these meetings?

The religious meetings of the church are the highest calls of duty to the disciple of Christ. They are the summoning of the army of Christ for further conquest. If all the army were there every time, how wonderful would be the spiritual victories! They are the family gathering around the heavenly Father's spiritual table. How shocking the insult to him of an unjustifiable absence! How sinful that half the chairs are vacant!

But the lack of a general sense of obligation in the church to attend church services not only causes the absence of half the church or two thirds of the church, but it renders those who do come unprepared for real participation or real profit from them. If coming at all is wholly optional the actual meeting is naturally felt to be a small matter.

What would be the character of the service if every member came to it as a soldier goes to the front in a battle, as a student goes to recitation in a college, as one of a loving family goes home for a Sunday dinner, or as a builder goes to the erection of a magnificent temple, eager to participate, ready to stand with elbows touching in the forward charge, alert, aggressive, earnest! What joy in preaching to such a people, what a sweep of Pentecostal power there would be in evangelistic effort!

Digitized by Google

The duty of church membership is a call to work in the church to the full measure of our talents and opportunity. Strange that it should ever have been thought otherwise! The drift of the local church into the condition of nine tenths non-workers, and her non-training for work and absolute non-employment of most of the converts and accessions to membership has so long existed that it fails to excite the alarm even of the ablest leaders. But face this condition squarely for an hour and measure all its significance — that is, if one can measure off its awful loss and wrong and spiritual paralysis!

What can possibly be the thought of church leaders about Christ's work committed to the church — they seem wholly unconcerned that nine tenths of Christ's enrolled disciples are given nothing to do? Is Christ's work so small or is it so largely completed that only one tenth of the number of professing Christians can now easily do it fully? Is there nothing more in the gospel programme as Christ gave it than can be done by the pastor alone in two Sunday services and one midweek lecture, with a handful of the members teaching for half an hour a week in the Sunday school in addition? If that is all, let us indeed close the great building all the week, send away all the members to worldly business, social dissipations and frivolity, and keep on adding other non-workers and letting the pastor actually do three fourths of all Christian work the church accomplishes. But what could be given the entire membership to

Digitized by Google

do if by some new Pentecost all should want really to work for Christ and his kingdom? If five hundred members who have long been church members and never performed a single definite service for Christ should some morning stand in long line before the door of the manse and should ask the pastor to set them to work, what would the good man do? He would see that the church needs a multiplication of lines of Christian work, a development of organized forces for these, a specializing for each kind of talent, and the wise employment of all. Let us hope he would see that the sinful, struggling, sorrowing, despairing world needs every kind of work these five hundred could possibly do; that Christ did every kind of work the world in his day of personal ministry needed and had every apostle and every follower of his always at it too; and then let us hope he would not send them away unemployed because he must go back to his study and complete his eloquent sermon on Christian work!

But we are now concerned with the church member's duty in this fearful condition of things of the vast numbers of the spiritually unemployed. Whether he belongs to the one tenth doing a little or to the nine tenths doing nothing, what is the Christian's duty to the church of Christ? This Christian man is probably a trained modern business man. He is accustomed to business enterprise, organization to the smallest detail, and also with the new gospel of efficiency. He is the man to start the

Digitized by Google

church into real activity or to startle it tremendously into a sense of responsibility. He can preach about Christian work as the pastor never can, teaching the children of light to learn from the children of this world. One such man has again and again revolutionized a local church.[1] Think of the power of a local church developed in all its personal possibilities and organized as business is now organized. It takes sixty-four men or more to make a shoe, but what enormous quantities of shoes they turn out perfected, and at lower prices than ever the old shoemaker dreamed of!

'Twill employ
Seven men, they say, to make a perfect pin;
Seven men to a pin and not a man too much.[2]

In New York the Casino near Tenth Street has twenty-eight association meetings each week in rooms connected with the saloon. The bar occupies the front half of the basement. But think of St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City, "which does not simply hold, but renders"[3] eight thousand and forty-six services in a year, of which fourteen hundred and twenty-two are distinctively religious, nineteen every Sunday and twenty-four every weekday.

Yet there are only one hundred and eleven churches in New York City below Fourteenth Street, to four thousand and sixty-five saloons in the same territory.[4]

[1] See notable instances in Roads's "Rural Christendom."
[2] Mrs. Browning. [3] Josiah Strong. [4] Jacob Riis.

Digitized by Google

But Jeremy Taylor long ago said, "When God would save a man he does it by way of a man." "I am a voice! This is the formula that sums up the vocation not of the prophets solely, but they define for every man, the humble yet great duty of truth. To resign themselves to being but a voice, to be scrupulously exact as the good clock. Truth does not belong to us, it is we who belong to truth!"[1]

The duty to become broadly and thoroughly informed on present-day Christian movements is closely allied to that of personal work. The swing of conquest for Christ in mission fields like Korea, China, India, Japan, and Africa is most inspiring; the social, political, educational, and religious changes in these lands are amazingly rapid and sweeping; the new spirit and aspirations among Roman Catholics in all the world is itself wonderful in promise of the rise of another Luther and the regeneration of that church or its rending to pieces; the movement for the first time among Mohammedans toward Christ; the bewildering multitude of Christian associations, beneficences, reforms, constructive Christlike work, educational, ethical, social, evangelistic movements are the expression of the deeper and broader Christlikeness in the church which the good Christian must try to understand and follow. The newspapers give more and more space to all these Christian forces and their results, but all they furnish of information is meager and inaccurate in details, out

[1] Charles Wagner, "Gospel of Life."

Digitized by Google

of true proportion toward the merely sensational, and thus often entirely misleading. The Christian member of the church owes it to his Lord who is so wonderfully riding forth to conquest to follow him eagerly and with comprehensive intelligence in his progress. He surely will be interested in reading the fascinating stories of missions in books and annual reports now so attractively gotten up, the charming and romantic lives of the great leaders, the world's really great men, and hear the addresses of these men. He will read the religious papers of the day closely and join in the wonderful world-wide agitation in evangelism, missions, and reforms intelligently.

The duty of contributing to the church is another fundamental religious duty strangely left in confusion of thought by church leaders. There is much vague discussion of proportionate giving, but the leaders seem unable to say, "Tithe." Of course it is plain the ancient Jews gave several tithes of their income in various offerings, and that there is no clear New Testament reënactment of the tithe, because the Christian is expected to give much more. But the situation actually now is that he gives much less than a tithe, probably, taking all protestant Christians in America together, only one tenth of a tithe!

What then is a practical first step? Does it not occur to anyone, not hopelessly befogged on money questions, that to urge the tithe as the prac-

Digitized by Google

tical first thing to aim at is eminently wise? Many local churches have found it so.[1] Let us waive all argument that the tithe is a definite and permanent obligation, all discussion of its Jewish or Christian aspects, and let us start somewhere in a more worthy giving. The tithe has always been found to be the best starting point, definite, inspiring, divinely blessed, and producing wonderful returns.

Paying to the Lord's cause should be systematic as well as proportionate. Every good cause should be remembered in due course. It should be with the sense of stewardship of all money and goods under God. It is this which is distinctively the New Testament ideal for paying to God's cause. The sense of partnership with God in his business is fundamental to the Christian, and this carries with it the use of all money under divine guidance.

Lastly, the church member must be a worthy representative of Christian life and character. He stands for the church among men. He is the only measure to many of what salvation means, of what religion comprehends. If he is mean, narrow, selfish, or tricky, all his preaching or the pastor's preaching to the men who know this man, to become saved or to be religious, is largely wasted breath. But how overwhelming the emphasis of an attractive, sincere, true, holy life to all preaching! The Tamil man said, "You want to explain God's Word accord-

[1] See Roads's "Rural Christendom," Chap. XXII; "Layman's," Tithe Tracts, Chicago.

Digitized by Google

ing to your nasty experience. You must go to God's standard, not bring God's standard to you." "If all Christians lived as well as their Book teaches, no one could resist their preaching." Lyman Beecher said, "If a little holiness in good men, though balanced by remaining sins, occasions at times unutterable joy, how blessed must God be who is perfectly and infinitely holy." Let us be

> In pulses stirred to generosity,
> In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
> For miserable aims that end with self —
> Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
> And in diffusion even more intense.[1]

"There have been men in whom life seemed complete who have yet walked very humbly. They had no pride of life. And why? Because always before them and above them stood some great principle, some duty to which their life belonged, not to themselves. Consecration! That is what we need."[2]

It was said of Wendell Phillips, that radiantly pure knight of our own day, "In public life and in private life he walked without deviation from the loftiest standards. There was . . . not one surrender to temptation, not one instance of faltering in duty . . . nothing that tarnishes the luster of the consistent whole."[3]

Of love which is the only spirit that will make a Christian man a worthy representative of the church

[1] George Eliot, "The Choir Invisible."
[2] Phillips Brooks, Sermon.
[3] Charles Russell, *Success*, 1910.

Digitized by Google

of Christ among men, Tolstoi says: "Men think there are circumstances where one may deal with human beings without love, and there are no such circumstances. One may deal with things without love . . . but you cannot deal with men without love."

> Love is life's end! an end but never ending,
> Love is life's wealth, ne'er spent but ever spending,
> Love life's reward, rewarding in rewarding,
> Thou wilt not love to live, unless thou live to love.[1]
>
> [1] Edmund Spenser.

Digitized by Google

XVI

CONSCIENTIOUS CHARACTER AS IN CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

WE cannot too steadily keep before us the marvelous changes in modern life — wrought in less than a century — from extreme simplicity to ever more entangling complexity. The rude wagon of the country village required little adjustment of wheels, axles, or shafts; all could be loose and rattling, as "Old Bones," the farmer's slow horse, dragged it along with its load. But the mammoth one-hundred-and-twenty-ton locomotive, made to run seventy miles an hour, or the automobile speeding one hundred miles an hour, must be adjusted almost as perfectly as the parts of a gold watch or they will have blazing axles or a fatal crash in their first hour.

So in the old oaken bucket the clear crystal water needed no analysis; it was far away from contamination of congested populations. The city well, however, if still permitted to exist, or the city reservoir, where modern filtering is not yet done, often has water looking just as clear, but reeking with germs of typhoid or other diseases. Only a chemical analysis

Digitized by Google

frequently made will guard against poisonous or diseased elements. In a similar way food is adulterated or poisoned by greed of manufacturer and greed of merchant, and only chemical analysis detects for us the unwholesome parts. But no one considers it unimportant, though the deleterious element be only a fraction of one per cent or in small traces.

All this is a parable of Christian character because of the complications and diversified responsibilities of life now. The elements of sin, in selfishness, in mixed motives, and in subtle evil spirit, exist in some of the best Christian people — in very minute traces, perhaps, yet they are sufficient to destroy personal power and to paralyze influence; often they are sufficient to alienate others from Christ and the church.

The Holy Spirit is the spiritual and moral chemist, and the Word of God the test tube and precipitating force. Let us sternly and thoroughly for ourselves apply the test and seek the Spirit's brightest illumination within us.

It is not a morbid introspection that the practical modern Christian needs, not a wearisome and oft-repeated self-examination, but a sensible Watch! lest he that thinketh he standeth shall fall! Therefore, as keenly as we may, we turn our eyes and testings upon ourselves on several vital topics related to a true Christlikeness. A few crystals of cyanide of potassium cause speedy death, a few subtle sins usually unrecognized sap personal power for Christ's service fatally.

Digitized by Google

I. *The Significance of Resisting Temptation*

Temptation to evil is an experience that continues to the very end of the most godly life. The fact of being tempted to any sin is not in itself a matter of personal guilt, nor is the persistence of gross temptation a proof of any personal moral corruption. So far as Satan or other evil spirits in or out of human form are the tempters there will be cunning inducements offered to the best people to sin. These temptations are possible because some moral distinctions will always be subtle in many acts of life, because Satan goes about seeking to devour, and because occasions arise in every life when that life is peculiarly susceptible to inducements toward evil that some good may follow.

Let us study the ethical philosophy of human temptation. The attack of the tempter is upon some human desire which at that moment is consciously or subconsciously seeking gratification or may be stimulated to seek it. The desire itself at the time may be right, but inordinate or uncoördinated with the desire of a rounded good character. To gratify it fully would be sinful because it puts the man out of right relation to higher things; as, for instance, over-eating induces drowsiness and sluggish mental and spiritual activity; or over-indulgence in sports for recreation unfits for the serious business of life; or undue desire for wealth makes man sordid; or passion for office or personal power in itself fosters

Digitized by Google

pride and self-sufficiency, which becloud faith in God and love for God. These are temptations to sin acting upon what are in themselves proper desires, but have become inordinate. Such was the temptation to Christ to make bread out of stones in the wilderness.

Resistance to this class of temptations puts these desires into their proper place and coördination. It gives rounded Christlikeness, perfect control of all the saved nature, and consequent organized personal power. It is an ethical gymnastic of the highest value.

Other temptations are to desires essentially sinful or to desires exercised upon sinful objects, such as to drink intoxicants, to lust after strange women, to theft, to lying, or murder. Remember again that the best men are tempted to these grossest of sins through the holding out of some desirable and proper gain or great pleasure to be derived by the temporary yielding. It is no proof of sinfulness in Christ that he was tempted to worship the Devil, nor do we dishonor Christ by believing it was for the moment a real temptation; he wanted to conquer the kingdoms of this world, he wanted power over men to win them to righteousness, and Satan unquestionably has much power in the world. Christ was not the only one thus tempted, nor have his disciples so fully resisted as he did. Churches are tempted to accomplish the noble desire to save men and to develop them in the spiritual life by means of methods which

Digitized by Google

promise to accomplish these results more speedily; but these methods plainly compromise righteousness. The appeal to Jesus and the appeal to the church is upon the lofty spiritual passion to save the world, and the price demanded is, like the hook under the bait for the fish, very skillfully concealed.

Methods as well as purposes must be wholly righteous. The Jesuits yielded where Jesus resisted in compounding with the Devil on methods, though their purposes were to give what they regard as triumph to the church of Christ. They take the Devil's weapons of lying, despoiling, and even murdering to gain the kingdoms of this world. But the Devil has beaten them in lying and they are losing the few kingdoms they gained for a while by paying Satan's price. The man who bows ever so slightly to Satan to gain power to do good destroys in himself the only real power which can do permanent good, the holy and Christlike spirit. By resisting, he gains more fully this very personal power.

Temptation of the third class is wholly in relation to God and applies to faith, hope, and love toward God. In the realm of faith men are tempted to extravagant presumption upon the mercy and providence of God. So Jesus was tempted to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple in a spectacular way to show his trust in God and God's particular love for him. So men throw themselves in their sins upon the future judgment of God in an illogical and reckless disbelief of hell and divine justice; or

Digitized by Google

they claim universal divine healing in spite of the express declarations of Christ and the instances he adduces of particular selections like Naaman and the Shunammite mother for divine healing in God's dealings; or on the other hand they limit the power and wisdom and love of God by theological formulas or personal doubts. The resistance to temptations to doubt or to presumption grows faith upon trellises that give it largest fruitfulness.

Temptations affecting men's love to God are to make it less than supreme by giving first place to other love grown great by the wonderful love of God. A Christian man loves his wife more than husband ever loved wife before because the love of God is shed abroad in the hearts of both. So men are tempted to love the wife more than God, and some foolish wives would have it so, but this defeats the very conjugal love it would promote. Keeping love for wife second to love for God makes love for wife greater than if it were first. The same is true of parental love and of filial love, now grown to such depth and purity in Christian hearts. It is only when God is supreme that such love is at the best.

In our clearer views of religion the dangers of monastic repudiation of love for wife and children in the supposed interest of deeper love for God are about past. But there is a harsh asceticism which frowns upon love for man as man, and which still marks off spiritual castes, and a narrow Pharisaism which ever claims exclusive privileges with God's

Digitized by Google

love. The love to God which is supreme is never alone. This love is the highest peak of a mountain range full of peaks of love to men which are just a little lower.

Fiery temptations likewise center about Christian hope in God. There are the follies of a blind optimism as foolish as that of the owl in daylight with eyes shut hooting, "All's well! All's well!"—a hope which becomes a soothing soporific toward spiritual and moral drowsiness and indolence. This is a temptation more attractive and hence more perilous and more common than that to a pessimism which sees evils but does not hear God. For there are voices of God in the world which good and wise men also hear, seeing the extent and forces of evil. They believe in God the omnipotent, and therefore they cannot be pessimistic though they see all the evils the pessimist sees. And though they also, like Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, are "men having lofty ideals who see actual conditions," they also hear God and count God into the world's condition. They have even loftier ideals and they see sin more fearfully, but they have the vision of God over all.

II. *The Fearfulness of Prejudice*

One way of judging others is forbidden by Jesus and another way is declared to be necessary and proper as a spiritual and moral safeguard. One kind of judgment of men is based upon their fruits; that is, upon adequate evidence, plainly good or

Digitized by Google

plainly evil. This judgment upon real and sufficient evidence is proper. It is essential to the moral safety of the individual and to the moral progress of the world. We are right in declaring a bad man, so known by his fruits, a bad man, just as we are under obligation to declare a good man good, provided the evidence from his deeds is clear and sufficient.

But it must be evidence as conclusive in the case of the man as fruit is to the character of a tree — evidence which is beyond a reasonable doubt, which can be tested by well-established standards, and which can be exhibited to others. We may and must judge every man in our hearts as if in a properly constituted court of justice and give the verdict in accordance with the evidence, the real evidence, and only the evidence. This is judging the tree by its fruits, the man by his manifest outward expression in deeds, manner, and words.

To judge men good or bad without such evidence is a grave wrong to a man which Christ forbids and against which he warns us. It is what we call prejudice, a sin against man fearfully prevalent and stubborn.

The very word "prejudice" is a picture of the wrong it involves. It is (*pre*, before) a judgment before the evidence is heard, and its stubborn evil is that it judges and then is unmoved by the evidence or will not even hear it. It is based upon many things, feelings in the judge, influences of others than the person judged, sometimes very noble motives and

Digitized by Google

purposes in the judge, but always other things than clear evidence, the point so plainly in sight, which alone is the proper ground for judgment.

Fearful wrongs have been done to men by prejudice. It is almost impossible to realize the power and stubbornness of prejudice even in good men. Indeed it exists most immovably in good men obsessed with certain purposes, motives, or feelings, which they think a particular judgment will promote.

Prejudice would seem to do most terrible harm and wrong when it is the decisive factor in a legal judgment against a man. It is only when one has had actual experience, as counsel and witness in courts of law, both civil and ecclesiastical, that he appreciates the extreme care with which civil courts seek an utterly unprejudiced judge and jury. The judge himself will decline to try a case when he is related to either of the litigants, in which he might have the slightest pecuniary interest, or of which he has heard largely of one side. He is thus careful, not only because he desires that there shall be no appearance of prejudice in the eyes of others, but because he really distrusts his ability to give that absolute fairness which he is sworn to accord and which he desires to give. Yet judges of our courts, in spite of every precaution, constantly present fearful instances of the gross evils of prejudice. The prejudice is usually unconscious, but it does all the greater damage for that. Juries acquit a prisoner unaccountably when the evidence establishes guilt

Digitized by Google

beyond a reasonable doubt, or they find a man guilty when there is only the flimsiest and most unreliable testimony against him. All this is done by prejudice.

In times of general excitement over a case, a very strong public sentiment one way or the other, the courts will delay the trial until this excitement or resentment has spent itself. They hold that probably no jury, however conscientious and uncorrupted, would fail to be powerfully influenced by general public opinion. Justice is impossible in such an atmosphere of popular prejudice.

Then there are prejudices inspired by most illogical things. An accused man's personal appearance, with many jurors counts for or against him more than a great mass of testimony. The plea of a plausible lawyer determines many a case, whatever the evidence, because he skillfully appeals to some prejudice he knows to exist in the mind of the jury or which can be aroused. Judges know that certain lawyers always do this unjust thing; that they win cases on pure prejudice.

In ecclesiastical courts prejudice rules almost unchecked, for there is little care in selecting the jury or the judge. The fact that the men are good men is supposed to guarantee a just judgment. And the consciousness of the men that they desire to be conscientious makes them a dangerous jury. For is it not plain that the prejudices of a good man are stronger than those of the wicked? Because the feelings either of sympathy with the accused or the

Digitized by Google

accuser, or of indignation against the wrong charged, are more intense and conscientious. I am convinced that the verdicts of ecclesiastical courts in any case popularly discussed are peculiarly unreliable, and that nowhere has unmitigated prejudice fuller play and less safeguard. I say nothing of the inexperience of judges, counsel, and jurymen in so momentous and hazardous a business as conducting a trial.

But in private judgments of men good people, by prejudice, do untold wrong and injury. Here prejudice has unlimited scope, and the reputations of ministers, of notable Christian people, of earnest fellow church members go down before the slanderous tongue of pure prejudice. Yet all the while the fruit of their lives proves they are good and worthy.

Because Christian men judge of deeds and words so constantly by their conscience they have the persistent, spontaneous habit of judging all the time. To them it is like breathing to judge their fellow men. What if the fruit is right before them — good fruit to prove good character? Judgment based on fruit would seem a tame judgment. So they look wise, as if knowing more than others, and their prejudice judges in the dark.

Where, then, is the harm? If the fruit is before all eyes, will not everyone condemn the man who ignores it? By no means; other people also have prejudices, and prejudice appeals to prejudice, arouses prejudice, and closes the mind against otherwise overwhelming evidence.

Digitized by Google

Take a few concrete cases.

A certain very prominent citizen is notable for self-sacrificing good works, for unostentatious devotion to all the work of his church, for extraordinary zeal in doing good in many ways. All the fruit of his life proves that he is a notably good Christian. But alas! his earnestness seems to rebuke others, his liberal giving shames the stingy soul, his whole life makes the self-constituted judge uncomfortable. So prejudice arising from these feelings sets itself to defame the good man. "See the way he enjoys the praise he is receiving," says Prejudice, though in fact the good man has always shown embarrassment at praise. "See the prominence his office in the church gives him," though in fact, again, the very judge knows the good man has declined important offices frequently. These and other surmises, pure surmises of deep-seated prejudice, are enough. "The man is a hypocrite, I believe," says Prejudice; for you can always call a man a hypocrite when you cannot prove anything against him definitely. "If you could see into his heart you would find shrewd planning for personal advantage in all his goodness!" Alack and alas! we are now seeing into the judge's heart. "It is fine advertising for his business, to say the least, and I should not wonder if in his mingling with so many men and women he is guilty often of gross sins;" for usually some dark devilishness must be supposed by Prejudice.

Or take the gossiping slander of one minister —

Digitized by Google

God save the mark!—by another. To the remark, "That was a fine sermon he preached," this ministerial Mr. Prejudice says, "Yes! but I have known men like that to have books of skeleton sermons by great preachers, and I doubt not if you could look through his library you would find the source of his fine sermon!" And to the generous word, "His spirit is so humble, and I am told he gave up a larger salary to do the great work he is doing in that church," Mr. Prejudice responds gravely, "True! but you know some men like the honor of that sort of thing better than money! He is very susceptible to praise, as you can see!"

Then take the astonishing opinion, yet universally held, that when once a minister or prominent Christian man is accused of a flagrant immorality, even if he is acquitted, "it will stick to him; his usefulness is permanently crippled!" Do these suave good people realize how they are lending themselves to the worst activities of Satan? Not only does their prejudice make it almost impossible for a good man to vindicate himself against such accusations, but they will not permit him to stay vindicated — they throw back the fearful mud he has so agonizingly scraped off, and which again and again he must scrape off, only to be bespattered again by these brethren! If there is anything peculiarly demoniac in prejudice, it is here!

Indeed it will sometimes be necessary to believe on good grounds of real and overwhelming evidence

Digitized by Google

that a minister convicted of gross immorality and expelled from the ministry and from the church is absolutely innocent and a very godly man; but to continue to hold a man guilty after he is justly acquitted — even the people who say "It will stick to him" acknowledging the justice of the acquittal — is a reversion to imbecility as well as prejudice.

What is the havoc men really work by their judging without evidence, judging by prejudice?

1. Parents destroy the influence of their pastors over their children, that influence which may be the only hope of their children's salvation.

2. Church officials shatter the personal power of fellow officials or of their pastor. Yet they imagine they are deeply concerned for the church's welfare and in the very expression of their utterly unfounded or only partially founded prejudices declare they are doing it for the sake of the church!

3. Men thus cripple Christian reputation for real goodness, — that reputation which is one of the most precious and unique developments of Christianity in the world. These people of prejudice do little good themselves, but they destroy the value of a vast amount of Christly service by others.

4. Prejudice is a monstrous injustice. It is the mother of slander, the most odious and uncontrollable evil in the world. It condemns a man without giving him notice of his trial, without giving him right of defense or witnesses — all upon the inward feelings of the self-appointed judge.

Digitized by Google

Besides the general field of prejudice, which is cultivated against men, the same in race, religion, nationality, or social class, there are the many prejudices of long standing on these distinctions. Think of the cruel and pitiless wrongs done to other races, — the negro, the Chinaman, the Jew, the Indian, — because of utterly senseless and unchristian prejudice, prejudice against which noble character, great intellectual attainments, marvelous achievements, and every effort to please and conciliate are of no avail.

Consider religious prejudices of Catholic against Protestant and vice versa, of the various sectarians in protestantism, of the Liberal against the Orthodox and the Orthodox against the Liberal! These various parties are judged, not by their fruit of good deeds and spiritual life, but by the color of their bark, the shape of their leaves, the depth and spread of their roots or branches. Prejudice, bigotry, anathemas, excommunications of church by church is the drearisome history. Five hundred witches were burned at one time in Geneva.

We are now in the days of social caste and haughty blue-blood prejudices even in America—a form of prejudice so silly and unreasoning that it is astonishing sane people can ever entertain it. But many otherwise very intellectual people do very loftily look down upon the common people!

It is no small matter to cultivate the judicial attitude toward all men. The upright and impar-

Digitized by Google

tial judge is a rare man even among those learned in the law. The advocate is easier to develop. But in private estimate of other men, no less than when acting as jurors or judge, it is evidence, evidence, evidence only which the true man of God regards.

The judicial attitude gives power to a man's personal opinions and utterances. It is worth cultivating for its intellectual value, for the peace of mind it brings to a man, but most of all as a Christlike duty. How great the help one can render in many an impending injustice by that splendid nobility to analyze, weigh, and decide strictly by the evidence in a case. The man who sees the tree, not by its few gnarled branches, its broken bark, or twisted roots, but by its splendid fruit, is the Christly man.

Prejudices belong to the dark ages of horrible superstitions and church bigotries, and should be cast into the deep grave of past follies.

III. *The Self-Revelation of Rivalry*

It is often a humiliating revelation a man has of his real character when the desperation of a close struggle with another for a desirable place is approached. The sporting world and the political world admire "a good loser," a man who can act generously when beaten and be free from bitterness, a man who can sincerely congratulate his successful rival at the very moment he himself loses. The defeated candidate therefore sends the first cheery telegram to the man who is elected; even the prize fighter

Digitized by Google

painfully drags himself from the sawdust and shakes hands with the new champion.

Shall Christians train themselves to do less than these sinners do? Will they indulge in bitterness and envy and fling mean insinuations against the success of others? What claim then have they to more brotherliness and more generosity of spirit than the heathen?

True, it is not a pleasant thing to do. By all the worthy ambition and real desire for larger usefulness with which the good man strove for the high place, and strove honorably in every way, the disappointment at the sight of another in it is the more fearful. Probably men of the world never have the intense desire for success which the good man feels for success in Christian service in the places he seeks. The struggle is not that with material weapons, but it is that of great souls with great souls. Rivalry comes in church work itself. The neighboring church of the same or another denomination is pushing against you for larger congregations, larger Sunday schools, or young people's movements. The superintendent and teachers, the leaders of the young people, to say nothing of the pastor, are strenuously working to hold all they have and to gain others as yet unchurched. Methods become intense and exciting and sometimes the other church succeeds at your expense.

Now is the Satanic opportunity for envy — that wholly evil trait of character, and that easy lapse

Digitized by Google

from generous emulation in good works. There is for the moment a sinful gratification in envy, in jealousy, or in bitter resentment, which seems a relief from the hard strain upon brotherliness and generosity in a strenuous campaign.

Rivalry reveals what remnants of envy remain in a man. It will do good squarely to face this self-revelation. Envy will belittle the place or success of the winner. It cries, "Sour grapes!" But the good Christian is a good personal loser; his only desire is that Christ should win. He rejoices in another's gain in Christ's work because it is all in the family and all can share in the honor of it after all the struggles.

Resisting these temptations to envy and petty meanness to successful rivals, the Christian grows into a broad and generous brotherliness to all men. The struggle is worth while. The bitter disappointment may have a sweeter victory than the achievement would have been if it becomes the victory, permanent victory, over all that is small and mean in the soul.

IV. *The Test of Fully Forgiving Enemies*

This is one step still higher in love. The rival is one who competes for the same place side by side, and it is hard enough for poor human nature to love him when he reaches the goal first. But the enemy lifts his hands against us, and it may be has dealt us grave injustice and wrongs. How can we for-

Digitized by Google

give and then love our enemies? The natural man does not forgive his enemies, but we may not plead the old nature for any holding of spite or resentment, for the very beginning of the Christian life is the new nature of forgiving love.

There is no escape from it; the true Christian must forgive his enemies. If it requires all the force of his stern sense of duty he must invoke that and forgive. If it is necessary to remember that God's forgiveness of his sins is absolutely dependent upon his forgiving others he must realize that awful fact. He must face the alternative either of forgiving his enemies or of losing his own soul.

And it must be forgiveness with real love. The command is, "Love your enemies," a command which leaves forgiveness far behind as only the preliminary step. All the acts of true love are to be done to our enemies. If he is hungry feed him, if he is thirsty give him drink. If he is now weak do not glory in that, but give him aid. If retribution comes to him do not say, "Good for him!" but shield him as love always does.

Love your enemies! Do good to them! Pray for them! Talk to God about them in the love of God. Intercede for them great spiritual and temporal blessings. No imprecations may find place in Christian prayers but a "Father, forgive them!" at the moment they are driving the nails through your quivering flesh on to the cross. That is, he instantly forgives at the moment of injury, fully

Digitized by Google

forgives into sincere love, aggressively does good for the injury received.

Here is the test of fire, the test of a relentless acid upon what was thought gold. We may not stop short of forgiving, not stop at merely forgiving, but we go to love and to love in active expression. We must know whether we forgive or can forgive our enemies, for it is fundamental to our own pardon from God. If this sin of the unforgiving spirit is in the cup, however concealed ordinarily, it is a fatal poison to spiritual life.

V. *The Test of Genuine Humility*

Real humility is toward God. It is an abiding lowliness of heart before him, in the vision of his holiness, his wonderful love in all its aspects, his patience, compassion, truth. Humility is kept in the soul by that comparison with God always before us.

It is menaced by comparing ourselves with inferior fellow men, that vicious and foolish thing Satan leads men to do. Comparing ourselves with ourselves is bad enough when we do it with the best men, but we will select the sorriest specimens of men at Satan's temptation and exult in being better than they are. The unsaved man selects the weakest and most inconsistent church member, passing by noble saints, and proclaims he is as good as any of them. Possibly he is, but what glory is in that degree of goodness? The church

Digitized by Google

member, made uncomfortable by stirring exhortations to piety and service, points to officials and even ministers no better. No better are they indeed, but what is there in that to be proud of? Whoever asked them to take such a standard for Christian life?

The return to real humility is not by comparing ourselves with the best of men, for there again Satan, the accuser of the brethren, indicates the weaknesses, the infirmities, and sins of these best men, — and they all have some, — and perversely we again drop to setting ourselves up against their faults instead of their splendid virtues. Who has not himself passed through such experiences, which so greatly foster spiritual pride in us?

How much genuine humility, then, have we? Just as much as we realize of God's presence in the clear vision of the glory of his moral and spiritual perfections. A humility before God which is not a depressing humiliation and craven spirit before men, but consistent with noble self-respect. Otherwise, as Newman Hall says, "spiritual pride corrupts our very graces, piety itself furnishing an occasion for evil, so that when we have conquered some temptation or performed some duty, our victory is often tarnished, our holy things corrupted by falling into the snare of self-complacency."

If this is humility, then it is not a cringing before men; not an undue self-depreciation, but consistent with that very important element of personal power,

Digitized by Google

a proper estimate of oneself; not a gloomy and discouraged self-consciousness, but a vision of the perfect ideal of righteousness in God joined in God with tenderest sympathy for us in all our struggles and the offer of divine help to reach our noblest possibilities. Real humility is the undertow of the eternal world carrying us far out into the ocean of love and holiness with personal power.

VI. *Personal Influence Guarded and Increased*

It must be from the personal center that personal influence is to be increased, and at the center it must be guarded. The circumference of it is not to be measured. Horace Bushnell, by his great sermon on "Unconscious Influence," has forever impressed thinking people with its indefinable extent. Probably few men can know the power of the influence they consciously bring to bear upon human lives. They may see what yields at the time, but they cannot know what mighty resistance to good has been weakened and undermined for a future surrender. This is true when influence is opposed to influence, but it is even harder to measure the value of a personal contribution to accumulated influence in a great cause.

We are not, therefore, in quest of the measure of our personal influence. The good man will always know very little of that, and it may be well it is so, "lest we be inflated beyond measure in pride by all the good we really are doing by personal influence."

Digitized by Google

What ought to concern us more is how to increase it and to guard it.

Personal influence is a radiation like light and heat. It increases by putting on more spiritual fuel and putting in more of the oil Jesus said the five wise virgins had in their vessels as well as in their lamps. The reserve power of a man is his mightiest force when teaching or preaching or living; not only what men see of a man, but the vision and impression which what they see gives them of finer virtues and character beyond.

This is called influence from the standpoint of the man affected by it; it flows in upon him from the other man. But it is exfluence from the soul exerting it; it flows out in all directions like radiated light and heat. A good man surcharges the atmosphere of a whole room into which he comes, of a company, a nation, the world. He makes it easier to do right in his atmosphere and harder to do evil. It is vitalizing to all virtue, warms feeble purposes into courage, and stimulates nobler instincts into positive goodness. It is moral light spread far out to illuminate perplexing problems of real life.

It is as natural a law of personality to radiate as it is of heat or light. Its extent is immeasurable. We need not concern ourselves about whether it will radiate, for that follows inevitably from positive Christian character. Jesus does not exhort his disciples to make their light shine, but being the light of the world simply to "let" their light shine. But we

Digitized by Google

do need to remember that personal influence on final analysis is simply our extended personality, whatever that personality has really become. It is the true man himself who goes out upon other lives and carries a corresponding atmosphere filled with his own virtues and Christian spirit. For the Christian spirit of a man is not confined within him. It enswathes him and is the first thing you strike as you approach him. Take this word from Horace Bushnell: "The influences we exert unconsciously almost never disagree with our real character. They are honest influences, following our character, as the shadow follows the sun. And therefore we are much more certainly responsible for them. They go streaming from us in all directions, though in channels we do not see, poisoning or healing around the roots of society and among the hidden wells of character. We must answer not only for what we do with a purpose, but for the influence we exert insensibly."

Atmosphere is an excellent parable of influence, but like all material parables, it is wholly inadequate as an illustration of spiritual measures. The great earth, eight thousand miles in diameter, carries an atmosphere of fifty miles beyond, possibly one hundred miles. But man, so small in physical bulk, may carry an atmosphere a million times greater than his own size and immeasurable distances in space and time beyond.

The earth's atmosphere is filled with the warmth of the great sphere, with the fragrance of the flowers

Digitized by Google

it grows, and with invigorating oxygen and ozone constantly replenished by its chemical activities. So does the human spirit fill his atmosphere with good cheer and joy and power.

The earth radiates what the great sun has poured upon her, and the Christian man expresses what Christ in him has imparted when the man is at his best. It is therefore with man, as it is with the earth related to the sun, a matter of perfectly right inclination to Christ. In the case of the earth the difference of a few degrees of inclination in its axis toward the sun makes the extreme difference between frozen midwinter and balmy, fruitful, delightful summer. The soul turned just a little away from Christ may become chilled and spiritually dead.

Personal Christian influence requires a perfect adjustment to Christ's will and a complete fellowship of love and faith and fellowship in work with him. And by every prayer and good deed which brings more of Christ into the man his influence is enhanced and extended.

Digitized by Google

XVII

HOW HABITS HOLD US FAST

THE law of habit takes hold of all of a human life. Not only outward acts, but thoughts, emotions, feelings, affections, religious devotions, and even the apparently spontaneous expressions of the soul upon a new occasion — all are governed by habit. What is a fair statement of the law and process of habit-forming?

> Every act inclines to repeat itself;
> Every repetition is easier;
> Becoming easier it tends to become automatic;
> The automatic is a fixed habit.

Habits grip and hold us. They are like the deep rut on the country road which holds the loaded wagon, or like the well-spiked rails which hold the powerful locomotive. Habits are brain ruts and brain railroads. If involuntarily drifted into they are ruts, if wisely developed they are railroads. A certain thought, motive, or desire arises in the mind and seeks a course to action. That is the first trip. It arises again in the mind and takes the course the first took, deepening its marks, and thus again and again, until it glides automatically from the inner origin to outer expression.

Digitized by Google

The speed and strength of habit formation depend upon the powerful first act or initiative, the uninterrupted repetition of the act, and the number of intense repetitions.

Acts are willed and executed. Nerves and muscles respond, let us say, in that particular way for the first time. But they mark a course and as they are repeated they become easier, then automatic, then dominant. Nerves and muscles then run always on the definitely laid track until, with a power equal to all the power of the multiplied repetitions, they are lifted to another course. That would be the case if a man should set himself simply to undo a habit without substituting another course of action.

But what is really the measure of power required to break a habit? Mark Twain,[1] turning philosopher, says, "Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time." The habit has been forming for a long time. Rodriguez says of good habits: "No one becomes perfect of a sudden; it is by mounting, not by flying, that we come to the top of the ladder. Let meditation and prayer be the two feet we make use of to do so. Meditation lets us see our wants and prayer obtains relief for us from God."

The habit would seem to relax itself by retracing the steps in its formation as the strong watchspring unwinds. But practically the force exerted to form a new habit contrary to the former will fortunately

[1] Mark Twain, "Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar."

Digitized by Google

hasten its dissolution, sometimes immediately or in a short time replace it. If the new initial act be by the regeneration of God's Holy Spirit, it is so powerful as to justify Dr. Thomas Chalmers' strong words in his famous sermon on "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection," teaching that supreme love to God drives out at once all love of evil, no matter how long abiding or deeply rooted in the soul. Have you ever tried correcting a name on an envelope or package? If you have made a mistake in its writing it is not always necessary laboriously to erase it. Write over it carefully, using what lines and curves of the old you may, the correct name, and then the parts to be erased are minimized and the task much easier. So in change of habits from evil to good we trace at once the powerful good new course upon the soul and then erase what interferes with it and deepen what may coincide.

The negative effort to destroy an evil habit is most graphically described by Christ. It is seldom successful. The destruction of the habit leaves the soul, after the Devil has been driven out, so empty and dreary that there is extreme peril that for very emptiness seven other devils may be permitted to enter. Dr. Chalmers says, "We know of no other way by which to keep the love of the world out of our hearts than to keep in our hearts the love of God." This is regeneration instead of negative reform by personal effort. The reform at best is an unending struggle of the old man with the unaided man's desperate will.

Digitized by Google

It is the substitution of the Christ at once for the evil which makes success sure. The force of such powerful initiative as comes from him shatters the old dominion of evil habits at one blow.[1]

1. We return, then, in thought to habit forming in its largest extent. Man becomes the creature and slave of his physical habits. There are eating and sleep, love of personal comfort, susceptibility to pain; there are habits of work, of sport, of physical pleasure, and above all the habitual ideals of physical possibility of health and efficiency, his body's development for life's services. All of these are not apart from man's greatest usefulness and Christian influence, but fundamental to it and in it all. And all these early in life run into habits which, as man becomes conscious of his life mission, already have him fast.

In habits of eating, for instance, the good man will study his real needs and resolutely put the knife to mere whims of appetite. The waste of human energy of a priceless character at the table is prodigious. It is as great as any other waste in the world. If a man by indulgence of hurtful appetite shortens his life, his active working life, by five years, the shortening is at the end where five years are worth twenty-five years earlier; if he diminishes his working efficiency all through life by over-eating, as many do, the loss can never be measured. It is loss at the

[1] See the cases in "Twice-Born Men" and "Souls in Action," by Begbie, and "Varieties of Christian Experiences," by William James.

Digitized by Google

outer margin, where greatest successes are won by just a little more intellectual keenness and alertness, by just a trifle more personal force. Are any whims of pleasure at the table worth this fearful price?

Look at habits of sleep. There are not many in our strenuous life who sleep overmuch in these days, except on Sundays, in foolish endeavor all day to lounge into recuperation. But there are many valuable men and women who sleep improperly. They do not appreciate the incalculable value of thoroughly restful and sufficient sleep and of the habit of getting such sleep. Insomnia is a terrible habit and has a horrible grip. Sleep is said to be twin-brother of death, but it is certain that sleeplessness almost makes death welcome.

Foolish men early in life take their worries to bed with them, and then insomnia as a habit is their bedfellow. How fearful the penalty for not heeding the Saviour's earnest words against anxiety! Is there any emphasis Christ's words against worry can have more powerful than long and weary night watches by those who disobey? John Wesley said he would as soon swear as fret.

Some men physically have trained themselves to silly babyishness about discomforts or slight pain; they create ten times the discomfort to themselves and others which the little inconvenience constitutes to real manhood; the nervous irritability they produce by whining is a grievous thing. Think of a good

Digitized by Google

man who stands the fiery strain of terrible temptations in the business world, and conquers there, coming home and flying into a passion because he cannot at once find his collar button! Or whining because some dish at the table is not exactly to his taste! Or cuffing his boy because he asks a question when the father is reading the newspaper! Then see him with a slight headache or rheumatism — no one ever was as sick as he is, no one ever suffered such pain. It is a double affliction if he ever is laid in bed for a few days — an affliction of the particular illness and a worse affliction of ill temper and the whines. The true Christian learns to endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ, and in little things. He has a habit of smiling at pain and inconvenience. There is a funny side to most of such mishaps and he sees it. But there is a Christian side to all of them and he takes that in the spirit of him who went as a lamb even to the slaughter and opened not his mouth; who bore scourging, spitting, buffeting, and all pains and indignities with a silence that made men wonder.

Then there are habits of work which are most desirable, habits of promptness, carefulness, real love of industry, thoroughness; habits of sport, enthusiasm, fairness, good nature, heartiness; habits of physical pleasure which make the country, the seashore, the mountains, the flowers, the birds, all objects of nature, a continual delight. What an acquisition to a Christian's good habits all these may become!

And over all and in all let there be a physical ideal,

Digitized by Google

as a habit, of exercising all parts of the body, of good care of it, prompt attention to every ailment or accident, and general development which makes a man's body the wonderful machine of his soul which God intended it to be.

2. Intellectual life acquires its own habits, good or bad. Happy is the man whose parents and teachers early led him to exact observation, to wise discrimination, to sober judgment only upon real and sufficient evidence, and to insatiable hunger to know everything that may be known. Here we emphasize that these qualities may become habits, and when so formed they are indeed railroads to all power and delightful life. What if early life has left the legacy of undesirable intellectual habits? Let us clearly see it and then gratefully remember and use the expulsive power of the new good habit. Force the right upon the wrong with all the power of an aroused soul.

3. But time and space fail to discuss social habits which are desirable; the cultivation of the conversational powers which are the media of deepest soul fellowship; the practice of the virtues of patience, sympathy, forbearance, the forgiving spirit, and the friendship habit; the multiplication of fellowship ties in societies, leagues, moral movements, philanthropies, home, and the church; the habits of moral character; motives become habits; desires, impulses, purposes, affections, courage, hope, cheerfulness all made into good habits and all second nature, personally remade nature, the real nature now.

Digitized by Google

Then there is the habit of happiness, of which Robert Louis Stevenson, the brilliant man who suffered so deeply yet had the habit of happiness, used to write so charmingly. Happiness is possible and may be continuous even in our world and with all trials and disappointments; it is certain when we get the habit of putting God into all things, see him in all, and get into coöperation with him in all. Then "disappointments are all his appointments" and trials simply opportunities for triumphs, crosses for crowns. Have you this habit of happiness or, better still, has the habit of happiness got you so that, like a through express train, you do not stop at little stations of Vexations, Slights, Rumors, or Piques? Aristotle says, "Many things there are, even among such as are not pleasant naturally, which, when men have become habituated to them, become pleasant."

All spiritual life, no less truly, runs into habits. So may faith, hope, love in all expressions become habitual. There is supposed to be serious danger to the deepest spiritual life when prayer and faith and love become habits; the fear is that they will become formalism and empty of spiritual value. But this is a misunderstanding of the real nature of habit. An act which is habitual is not less forceful than a first act, but more so. Habit is the groove in which the act runs, giving it direction and facility and removing friction, but the act itself is like the locomotive upon the track, which has all the more

Digitized by Google

power upon the track. In religion the sincerity, depth of love, and self-sacrifice of an act, and its resulting joy and power, may all be enhanced by becoming habitual. Of course if the first act of prayer and love is formal, the repetitions are apt to be formal and the habit will be formal. But when the initial act is deeply spiritual, and it so continues until habitual, it will remain deeply spiritual.

The law of habit applies to many acts which usually are supposed to be apart from it. It applies to an act as one of a class, though it may pertain to new persons and new situations.

1. For example, there are people who make much of first impressions of men and women they meet. They think these first impressions of a particular person are spontaneous and unique. But they do not see that they have a habit of deciding the character of a stranger by the perilous and superficial outer appearance and first expression he gives. It is surely a bad mental and moral habit, an offspring of a foolish conceit in one's extraordinary penetration. It amounts to judging by appearances, and first few appearances, and not by righteous judgment on fuller acquaintance and adequate evidence. The conceited judge himself is rudely awakened to its injustice and peril when someone judges him by first impressions, and he hotly protests. What we here want to impress is that it is a habit, a bad one, and one which has resulted in untold injury to good people and opportunity for the wicked.

Digitized by Google

2. Our conduct in a strictly new situation may also be the act of habits long formed. The choice of a husband or wife is made, not on new notions and feelings, but on certain old theories and attitude held habitually. We have been taught, until it is a fixed idea, certain notions of married life; we have developed ideals about a life companion, and all these habits of thought are back of what may be a sudden choice.

Or we feel for the first time the unutterable sorrow of a great bereavement in the home. But a little thought shows us how many habitual ideas and ideals and habits of emotional expression have produced the outburst of grief.

3. Even decisions of conscience are subject to habits. Our business habits, religious habits, moral training, and habits of reasoning enter into convictions of duty to strengthen or weaken them. George Eliot says, "Every strong feeling makes to itself a conscience of its own, has its own piety."

If all this is true, what can be more serious business in life than forming habits? How unfortunate for most of us it is that our habits are not formed consciously and by wise guidance, but undesignedly, accidentally.

What is the lesson to be learned once for all?

1. Never to do a single act which we would not have become a habit. For one act is the start of a habit, and the second act of the kind is more likely to be done than the first.

Digitized by Google

2. Begin to do the acts we desire to become habits. And always do them strongly. Begin every habit with all the power of Christian sincerity and the Holy Spirit.

3. Coördinate good habits into a full-rounded and Christlike character. Do not have a bad habit which destroys all the good influence you might develop from the many good habits you really possess. The perfectly honest man who is always late at appointments has his honesty properly discounted, for his waiting friends are impressed by the fact that he robs them of valuable time. The really affectionate father who has the habit of irritable temper or passionate anger cannot be fondly loved in return. The Christian who has the devotion of Thomas to go to Judea and die with Christ has his heroism overshadowed if he has also the doubting habit of Thomas. He will be remembered by the bad habit rather than the good. And so of all the multitude of lopsided, unbalanced, and uncoördinated characters of many people who are good at many points, but with bad habits at others.

> Greatly begin! though thou have time
> But for a line be that sublime,
> Not failure but low aim is crime.[1]
>
> While petty cares and crawling interests twist,
> Their spider threads about us, which at last
> Grow strong as iron chains.[1]

Character is the sublime sweep of an arch constructed of Christians habits, — finely cut and correlated

[1] Lowell.

Digitized by Google

stones. The keystone is love like Christ's for the larger life, buttressed on one side by "Love thy neighbor as thyself," in the conservation of self, and the Golden Rule for business on the other side. These three laws of love are on top and are wisely adjusted, and many gospel principles fit in below to the deep foundations of the new nature in Christ.

Habits and character thus plainly show tendency to crystallization into permanence. This is the logical basis, the scientific and psychological basis, for heaven and hell, the eternal condition of the good and the evil as fixed. As Joseph Cook says: "There is a day, of which no man or angel knows the time, after which the unholy will continue to be unholy, and the holy will continue to be holy. The last verity proclaimed in Scripture is the eternal permanence of moral character and the certainty that all crystallization of the soul into final permanence will bring with it its natural wages. The truth that I am afraid of is what all science, what all Scripture, what all human experience affirms,—that he who is unholy long enough will be unholy forever."

Digitized by Google

XVIII

SHALL IT BE "IN HIS STEPS"?

IT seems on first thought that an exact imitation of Christ is the perfect Christian life. Tolstoi's abandonment of Russian so-called "nobility" and his assumption of a peasant garb in a country village, where he lived in utmost simplicity as he supposed Jesus lived in Palestine, is a very attractive figure to many people. One man may do that, a few million of people might do it, without disturbing the wonderful onward progress of mankind. But what if the entire church of Christ forsook cities and railroads, universities and modern government? What if all Christians now threw away these comforts and privileges, the incalculable privileges for personal development and world-wide service, and tried simply to walk in Christ's actual footsteps in Palestine nineteen centuries ago, not his footsteps to-day and here?

Is not civilization in America, England, and Germany a true product of Christianity? Is it not the gospel that has so marvelously lifted up the common people and inspired the inventions, development of natural resources, extension of commerce, manu-

Digitized by Google

factures, and education, which so enormously increase the power and opportunity of human life? If Jesus the Christ came to-day to live an actual life among men, would he also repudiate what unquestionably his gospel has produced?

But even could we return to the primitive simplicity of the oriental community in which Jesus spent his thirty-three years, we should find much of our real life not in any sense covered by his footsteps. And in the complex life of to-day much more in which he did not personally live at all.

But beyond all that, we surely will not declare that his footsteps are to be found and followed mechanically. We know that there would not be adequate moral and spiritual exercise for the developing soul in that. The indolent moral nature asks for rules, seeks for set precepts for all particular cases, but the Christlike man desires ethical principles. He does not look for steps in the sand, but for a moral guideboard.

Let us very reverently, but frankly, and as fully as we may here, consider the necessarily limited personal example of Jesus as he lived in Palestine for thirty-three years in the first century. It is an ideal life within the limitations of his peculiar conditions. But let us see the large sections of our life which are not found in his earthly example so considered.

1. He was never married. True, he wrought his first miracle for a wedding and his gospel has pro-

Digitized by Google

duced the sweetest and best home man ever possessed. He leaves no man in doubt as to his attitude toward married life, but we have no footsteps of Jesus in married life as a human husband or a lover, nor as an earthly father training his children, nor as the head of a godly home.

2. He was never a business man, a merchant, manufacturer, or professional man. We have, therefore, no particular acts of his life in which he deals with workingmen in his employ, with customers or clients. And these relations are the most perplexing of modern Christian life.

3. He never sinned, and we have no example of what genuine repentance is as he would have repented.

4. He was never ill, never in a hospital, never is seen watching by the sick, and this large section of modern living has not a beaten track from him to follow.

5. He was a mechanic in daily work for nearly twenty years, but that part of his life is veiled in silence. Not a single day of it is described, not a sample of his work is exhibited. When his angry fellow townsmen rejected him as the Messiah, they spoke of his carpenter life as simply the ordinary workman's life of that period. Doubtless he was faithful, industrious, and thoroughly honest.

6. He was not a student in any school or college, so that student life has no footsteps to find in Christ's life.

7. He was not an author nor an editor. The

Digitized by Google

large community of literary workers has grave problems, but it cannot solve them "in his steps."

8. He was not a free citizen with a franchise to vote and offices to hold. What vast and varied responsibilities we have that did not come into his life!

9. He was not a stockholder, nor a director, nor an officer in a business corporation. Are there any relations more perplexing to the conscientious man?

10. He was not a woman in any of her stages of life — girlhood, adolescence, womanhood, wife, and mother; and woman now also as leader in church, in benevolence, education, society, the professions, politics, and world movements. So far as woman has special duties as woman there are no steps of Christ to follow.

Is it not foolish, therefore, to talk of looking for his steps as a guide to modern life?

On the other hand Jesus was a teacher of whose methods we have detailed account of untold pedagogical value to-day, never so well understood and appreciated as to-day.

He was a preacher and pastor who gives inspiration and suggestion to everyone in that office.

As a son to his loving mother he was ideal in his tender care for her, but also true to God when her officious claims stood in the way. Yet in this relation how meager are the actual steps he shows us.

But the example of Jesus surely is not of set rules of conduct nor of particular acts in the several rela-

Digitized by Google

tions of life to be mechanically copied by us. It may be helpful in some measure, to be sure, in realizing his example to imagine him in our places and to inquire what he would do in them. But this requires that we conceive his spirit and apply that to our problems now to determine what he would do. And then to answer the further question whether he, with his mission, would have responsibilities in every respect like ours, with our mission? May we not well omit laying out duties for him and at once very definitely learn our duties when we possess his spirit?

For Christ is infinitely more than a guide in a formally laid out way of life. He is the Way; he is the Life itself. We first are crucified with Christ, then we live; yet not we, self-centered and apart from him, but Christ liveth in us, and the lives we live are by faith in him, not by a Chinese kind of servile copying of him. "I marvel to find Christian men denying that Christ is the type and manifestation of the possible divinity in universal humanity."[1] This is so far above "in his steps" that it gives point to Wendell Phillips's answer to the old question, "Is Christianity a failure?" Wendell Phillips said, "I don't know! It has never been tried."

Christ's example is followed in really being like Christ in our spiritual nature, and in doing first of all the deep fundamental things of the godly life as he did them. That means prayer for hours of communion with God until we know his will concerning

[1] Lyman Abbott, Recent Sermon.

Digitized by Google

us; that means study of the Scriptures as he did until the very deepest truths are in us, and that means doing the complete will of God as thus made known to us, whatever the will of God may involve of temporary seeming failure, bitter opposition, sneers of present-day Pharisees and Sadducees, or some other hardships even to martyrdom.

Christ's example means doing perfectly the will of God in a uniquely wonderful spirit. This he adapted to his day and to his mission. We follow him when we also perfectly do the will of God in Christ's spirit for our day and mission; not even measuring results by his results, for he declares we shall do greater things because he goes to the Father.

Let us further get it clearly what the Spirit of Christ to be in us definitely is. This spirit of Christ is the Holy Spirit, which he promised to impart unto us and which first came upon the disciples and apostles at Pentecost. Remember they did not receive Christ's spirit by his personal influence over them; for after three years of this personal influence see them at his trial and crucifixion. Nor did they receive his spirit by their own inner development. He was given to them on that day, and the results which followed show the perfect identity of the Holy Spirit in the disciples with the spirit of Christ, without which we are none of his. That wondrous after-Pentecost love between the disciples is nothing less than Christlike love in all hearts responding heart to heart; that courage in speaking the truth is Christ again as when he faced

Digitized by Google

the same Pharisees and Sadducees; those triumphs of the gospel after Pentecost simply win again the crowds who first followed Jesus when he spake as never man spake. "When they beheld the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." The outside world recognizes those who are spirit filled as identical with Jesus in spirit, and we do well to recognize this truth. It will save us from the ordinary confusion of mind regarding what the Holy Spirit is and what he will accomplish in us when we receive him. To receive the Holy Spirit is to become Christlike.

In consciousness we shall feel him as the indwelling Christ and shall know that by the Holy Spirit the love of God is shed abroad in us.

But how can we know the will of God in the complicated phases and relations of modern everyday business, society, home, and the church? How did Christ come to know the will of God in his day? Not without diligent study of the word of God, incessant and importunate prayer, and the consequent enlightenment by the Holy Spirit. There is no scriptural warrant for expecting ready-made rules for our Christian life. One man, indeed, may learn of another who is filled with the Spirit, but even in apparently perfect analogies of situation it is perilous to follow any man instead of going for oneself to Christ by the word and prayer. This very need, absolute need of Bible study and prayer, is the safe-

Digitized by Google

guard of character development and of doing God's will in the new and fiery temptations of present-day life. They are the only safeguard, and the man who would be Christ's must ever employ them.

Here is the true philosophy of Christian assurance in our life. We are to see to-day with Christlike eyes upon the will of God. We, too, may have the Pauline heavenly vision, and also, like Paul, not for one moment, but for all life. When the scales fall off they remain off. By giving our bodies a living sacrifice, and being not conformed to the world but transformed, we prove the perfect will of God. Paul prays for the Colossians (Col. 1:9) that they might be filled with the knowledge of his will, and he says that Epaphras prayed for them (Col. 4:12) that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Jesus had declared it was his meat to do the will of him that sent him. It was more than the joy of eating, and this could only be when he was sure he was doing God's will.

The example of Jesus is given to us, then, essentially as the spirit in which God's will is to be done. It is the attitude of love toward God and toward men, leaving the expression of that love within large righteous limits for individuality to develop. Following Jesus promotes individuality instead of suppressing it. The moral and spiritual exercise required exactly to know the will of God by incessant prayer, and Bible study will create Christian manhood of the highest type, and the free expression of the love of God shed

Digitized by Google

abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit will bring out an individuality unique and interesting.

Christian casuistry finds in Christ's teachings some interesting problems of his day solved by him. These are richly suggestive.

1. He had the law of the Sabbath to deal with and he decided for himself that healing the withered hand and the afflicted woman, the man with the dropsy and the blind man, were not only allowable, but among the very acts for which the Sabbath was made. He decided that the disciples plucking grain and eating it did what is right. Here we derive the well-known principle that "works of necessity and of mercy" are proper on the Sabbath day. Jesus had the extremely developed casuistry of the Pharisees to meet, the most extensive and minute for all phases of life ever worked out, not even excepting that of the Jesuits, and like that of the Jesuits in later days, it excused the lust and greed of those hypocrites who sought rather to find loopholes for breaking the law than a full obedience of the law. By the cunning and assumptions of the Pharisees the Sabbath had been loaded down with numerous rules, making it a burden and a bondage. So that the principle Jesus enunciated, that the Sabbath is made for man, and that works of necessity and mercy are right on the Sabbath, is practical and valuable for all time. Being a principle and not a set of rules, it does not obviate the necessity of further Bible study, prayer, and the Holy Spirit to determine duty

Digitized by Google

to-day in the complicated issues of the Christian Sabbath.

2. Christ decides about the matter of ceremonial purification, of which the Pharisees had made so many refinements, that it is of value, but not an absolute moral duty.

3. He decides as to respective duties to God and the state, laying down in that decision a principle on which all modern commonwealths are founded, but which yet has not come to its rich implications and significance: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's." By that principle the state has shaken off the tyranny of ecclesiastical hierarchy, but is only now coming to its own, as also ordained of God, and to be directly subject to him and to acknowledge his sovereignty.

4. He decides about the true limits of filial love and obedience in his repudiation of his mother's interference in his special work and in his tender appeal to John to care for her at his crucifixion.

5. He decides against the loose and unlimited divorce of his time among the Jews. If we put ourselves into his circumstances and age we shall see why in Matthew[1] he allows divorce for adultery, but for no other cause: because the law of Moses which punished adultery with death had fallen into general non-enforcement. There would have been no need of divorce for adultery if the law were enforced, for

[1] Matt. 5:31; 19:9.

Digitized by Google

the death of both guilty parties by stoning would have effectually freed the innocent party in the marriage. And why in Mark [1] writing to others than Jews, as well as in Luke,[2] this exception is omitted by these evangelists because among the fierce other nations, where there was any sentiment on the purity of marriage, summary vengeance was taken.

These are all general principles, as illustrated in the specific cases Jesus decides, that require again deeper study of the word, importunate prayer, and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit to obtain a knowledge of the will of God in our situation to-day. Christ gives no detailed rules of conduct as the Pharisees did, and there may be harm done because we are not keen enough in every case to apply the principles to our specific cases accurately, but there would be greater harm by mechanically following rules of conduct. There would be greater harm to individual character by mechanical imitation of Christ and probably just as many misses in correct application, for our conditions are so different that even rules of conduct would also be perplexing to apply.

Out of the heart, the inner life filled by the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of Jesus, comes a following of Jesus in the New Testament ideal. Not only outward acts will then be a close "imitation of him," but the spirit will always be so. For instance, "Who shall deliver us from the spirit of bitterness?

[1] Mark 10:11. [2] Luke 16:18.

Digitized by Google

None but Christ. He will teach us not to hate our fellow men for what they are, but to love them for what they may become. With him we shall learn the secret of that divine charity which fills the heart with peace and joy and quiet strength."[1] Or, as Henry Drummond says of ill temper, "The peculiarity of ill temper is that it is the vice of the virtuous. It is often the one blot on an otherwise noble character, easily ruffled, quick-tempered, 'touchy' disposition. This was the Elder Brother's sin. No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of gold, not drunkenness itself, does more to unchristianize society than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relations, for devastating home, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom off childhood, in short, for sheer gratuitous misery-producing power, this influence stands alone."[2] Faber says: "To give offense is a great fault, but to take offense is a greater fault. It implies a greater amount of wrongness in ourselves, and it does a greater amount of mischief to others."

The example of Jesus thus followed will extend to our motives. Guided by the indwelling Christ, we will live by sincere motives and purposes naturally expressed in word and act. There has been a long struggle down the ages to fix upon motive as the real character of an act. Coleridge says: "It is not the

[1] Dr. Henry van Dyke, "Culture of Christian Manhood."
[2] Drummond, "Greatest Thing in the World."

Digitized by Google

motive that makes the man, but the man the motive. Granted a good man, a bad motive cannot sway him; granted a bad man, a good motive will not find him." And living by the Spirit the whole motive in dealing with men is love. "Some men think they can properly deal with men without love. We may deal with things without love, but never with men without love," says Tolstoi. Fenelon says, "True love can see nothing small; everything that can either please or displease God seems to be great." And Robert South says: "Love is such an affection as cannot properly be said to be in the soul as the soul in that. It is the whole man wrapt up into one desire; all the powers, vigor, and faculties of the soul abridged into one inclination."

See the love of Christ for his disciples. What could there be for Jesus intellectually in the society of such men as Peter and John? Or what in the higher reaches of the spiritual life with their dullness of soul and persistently materialistic conceptions of his Messiahship? Yet he desired daily and constant fellowship with them and gave himself wholly to them in a genuine love for them and unfeigned delight at every evidence of their spiritual growth. It was like a mother love with the babe's opening years, its cute little expressions, its coming teeth, its wonders of growth in so many ways; and as little condescending as is the mother's, as we see plainly in the gospels that Jesus found joy and satisfaction in the fellowship of these unlearned and humble twelve men.

Digitized by Google

Living by the love of righteousness as Christ did is the final touch of character. His righteousness is an inner vision of human rights and duties. It brings what Professor Bowne [1] calls, "Moral development in its three general directions — unfolding the moral ideal and strengthening the sense of duty; secondly, application of principles to action as to form a moral code; thirdly, the extension of the moral field." How slow the centuries have been in extending the moral field to Christ's love and righteousness for all creatures is seen when we remember that as late as 1515 in Geneva five hundred witches were burned at one time.[2] Blackstone says that in the seventeenth century in England one hundred and sixty offenses were punished by the death penalty, among them poaching from my lord's grounds or cutting my lady's dress. And in 1750 Lady Mary Wortley Montague said she expected to see it proposed in Parliament to strike the word "not" out of the commandments and insert it in the creed. The greater part of the statesmen had relapsed into immorality and infidelity. There was no disgrace in the drunken and foul talk of Premier Walpole nor in Premier Grafton appearing at a play with his mistress.[3]

As the spirit is radically regenerated into the Christ spirit, duty becomes supreme and the moral

[1] Bowne, "Principles of Ethics," p. 132.
[2] Crafts, "Christian Sociology," p. 372.
[3] Crafts, "Christian Sociology," p. 382.

Digitized by Google

ideal all powerful. Thomas Guthrie says, "By conversion man's will is renewed. Bad men are worse, good men are better than they appear. The attainments of a believer are always beneath his aims; his desires are nobler than his deeds."

Plato's and Aristotle's cardinal virtues were wisdom, courage, temperance, justice; the seven deadly sins of the early casuists were pride, avarice, "luxury" or lust, envy, appetite, anger, sloth. But under the spirit of Christ how the moral ideal has unfolded and the moral field enlarged. What has happened in history will be the progress in the human soul to maturity under the spirit; the microcosm will be like the macrocosm in ethical life. We are not spared the study of conditions by any set rules, as in the Koran's tens of thousands of precepts to the very simple life of the Bedouin. But we have light upon life from the indwelling spirit, identical in character with the Spirit of Christ; we have holy love in blessed warmth of enthusiasm for all helpful activities, and we have the word of God as the ever sufficient standard.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

32101 065103267

Digitized by Google